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THE TIMES

No. 65,116

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 19 1994

BR blames fare rise on strike

Railtrack gets green light for sell-off

By Nicholas Wood and Tim Jones

PLANS for a multi-billion-pound privatisation of Railtrack before the next election are to be unveiled next week as John Major hits back at right-wing critics who complain that the Government has lost its radical edge.

The disclosure of the Government's plans came as British Rail announced fare increases yesterday of more than twice the rate of inflation on some routes and blamed the rises on lost business caused by the signal workers' dispute.

The sell-off, which has been championed by the Treasury, will also smooth the path for Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, in his search for tax cuts. Railtrack, which owns the railway network, could be worth as much as £6.5 billion, equivalent to a one-off 3p cut in income tax.

Labour claimed that the fare increases were being imposed because passengers were being asked to pay for the "mess" of privatisation. Most London commuters will be hit by the full 5 per cent rise but elsewhere some fares will be unchanged and others will rise by under 2 per cent.

British Rail said that it had paid a heavy price for the disruption caused this year by the dispute with the RMT union. The company said: "Before the strikes began, the railways had begun to see a post-recession increase in commuting and had achieved

considerable success in attracting leisure travellers back to the network. The strike has wiped out that improvement." Brian Mawhinney, the Transport Secretary, will give details of the Railtrack sell-off in a Commons written answer next week. He is expected to opt for a stockmarket flotation with a majority stake being sold to the public.

The Prime Minister's decision to press ahead with the privatisation comes only two weeks after he shied away from a £1 billion-plus sell-off of the Post Office in the face of fierce opposition from a group of Tory MPs. That climbdown caused some Tory right-wingers to claim the Government had lost its nerve.

An announcement that the Government is prepared to press ahead with a sale of Railtrack, which owns 11,000 miles of track and 2,500 stations, many of which are ripe for commercial exploitation, should help to quell some of this right-wing Tory criticism.

Unlike Post Office privatisation, ministers do not need fresh legislation to sell Railtrack. All the powers they need are in the Railways Act. Selling the industry will pose a headache for Tony Blair, the Labour leader. While Labour will oppose the move, Mr Blair will be reluctant to give any commitment to take back such a big and expensive business.

Since the Railways Act re-

ceived Royal Assent a year ago, British Rail has been divided into 70 companies. As well as Railtrack, there are 25 train operating companies and three rolling stock leasing companies. Railtrack will make most of its day-to-day income from fees paid by the train operating companies to use the network and from leasing them stations. Its initial income has been estimated at £2.2 billion a year.

The operating companies are in the vanguard of the rolling privatisation of the railway business, with ministers planning to sell 51 per cent of passenger services to franchise-holders by April 1996.

Henry McLeish, a Labour transport spokesman, seized on the fare rises to attack the sell-off plan yesterday. He said that £700 million had been squandered on preparing for privatisation and passengers were suffering again. "Ordinary people are fed up with paying for the Tory mess," he said. "The wasteful signalling dispute, which was prolonged by the Government, cost BR £150 million."

"The privatisation is pushing up fares by putting the train operating units at the mercy of Railtrack and the Treasury. Because the Government are so desperate to make some money, they have pushed up Railtrack's access charges to ludicrous levels."

Rage and relief, page 8

11 killed in Gaza uprising

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

AT LEAST eleven Palestinians were killed yesterday and up to 200 injured in fierce street battles in the Gaza Strip between Palestinian policemen loyal to the PLO and Islamic militants.

The bloodshed was the most serious since Israeli troops withdrew six months ago raising brief hopes that the end of 27 years of military rule would bring a new era of peace.

A curfew was imposed and hundreds of rioters detained as the ruling Palestinian Authority attempted to prevent a general uprising. By nightfall, there was still sporadic shooting six hours after fighting erupted outside a mosque which was the main centre for Islamic militants opposed to the PLO.

Civil war threat, page 15
Leading article, page 21



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Anne Ashworth reports on fixed interest stocks

MARKETS

Why investors should watch fund managers

PRICES

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Section Two

Serbs mount napalm raid

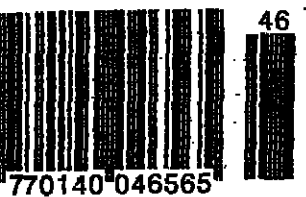
UN observers in Bosnia said that napalm had been used in a Serb air attack on the safe haven of Bihac in northwest Bosnia yesterday. The deadly agent has never before been used in a war in Europe. The breach of the Nato no-fly zone and the failure to react immediately with air strikes led to a new embarrassment for the alliance. Page 17

Grobelaar test

Bruce Grobelaar plays his first match in England today since he was accused of match-fixing. He will be in goal for Southampton in the Premiership game against Arsenal at The Dell. Since the allegations Grobelaar has shown that personal pressure cannot throw him off balance. Page 48

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Dreaming: the jackpot for tonight's lottery draw is expected to reach £7 million



Hoping: by the middle of yesterday afternoon, 35 million £1 tickets had been sold



Waiting: many players are expected to wait until just before the 7.30pm deadline

Police monitor lottery winners to beat drug cash laundering

By Stewart Tandler and Alexandra Freen

WITH the jackpot for tonight's first draw in the National Lottery expected to reach up to £7 million, big winners face security checks to make sure they are not helping money launderers and criminals.

Camelot, the lottery organisers, are concerned that cash from drug trafficking and serious crime could be cleaned through the lottery. In other countries, lottery winners have sold their tickets to criminals. Money laundering gangs have also abused scratch card systems. The lottery will introduce cards in Britain next year.

By yesterday afternoon, 35 million £1 tickets had been sold to 15 million people. As the countdown to the first televised draw on BBC today gets underway, long queues are expected at many of the 10,400 stores now selling tickets. Many players are expected to wait until just before the 7.30pm deadline.

Participation for the first draw has been so high that hundreds of thousands stand to win additional prizes of between £10 and £100,000.

Around £31 million of this week's takings so far will be entered in the draw. Players have chosen to enter the remaining £4 million in future weeks' draws. As the first winners are drawn, Camelot security staff will be preparing to photograph all winners of £50,000 or more. The pictures will be available to police and Customs if they have reasonable suspicions that the winners could be criminals.

Neil Dickens, a former national co-ordinator of regional crime squads and now head of the lottery security, said it was possible for a winner to sell his ticket at a premium to a drug

dealer or money launderer. The winner could sell his ticket for a £100,000 prize to the criminal who might pay £110,000. The dealer would then claim the prize money and his cash would appear to come from legitimate sources. The tickets carry no personal identification.

Scratch cards — where the purchaser scratches off a cover and can win instant prizes — have also been used in Canada by launderers. In one drug investigation, police found piles of instant win tickets from a state lottery totalling \$270,000 in unclaimed prizes.

According to Mr Dickens checks have also been carried out on retailers. Shopkeepers are required to say whether they have previous convictions, court orders or bad debts and four have been struck off out of 10,000 who have been registered. Police and Camelot have also been advising ticket sellers about extra security because of the extra cash they have gathered.

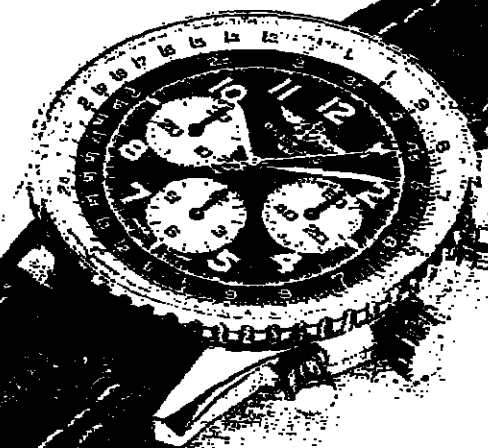
The six winning lottery numbers, plus a special bonus number, will be randomly selected from a transparent drum just before 8pm. The hour-long programme, starting at 7pm, will be presented by Noel Edmonds and will feature the conductor Sir Georg Solti, the pop group Band Boys Inc and the boxer Frank Bruno.

The National Grid is expecting a massive surge in demand for electricity when viewers to the show put the kettle on after it finishes.

Jackpot winners or those claiming prizes of £10,000 or over will be able to ring the lottery hotline on 0645 100 000. Camelot will have expert advisers on hand.

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Baffled bees wait for winter

By Robin Young

ONE swallow may not a winter break, but bird-watching societies around Britain as well as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds are a-twitter with reports of late-flying summer migrants, including swallows, taking advantage of the warmest November the country has enjoyed for nearly half a century.

They are not the only unseasonal consequence of weather that meteorologists describe as "quite exceptionally mild". Summer's bumble bees are to be seen feeding on early

flowering winter jasmine, ladybirds are clambering among the needles of garden-centre Christmas trees and butterflies were spotted yesterday flitting around several London parks.

In contrast, most of the winter migrant ducks and geese, which should by now be settling in on Britain's lakes and reservoirs, are still in transit somewhere over the Baltic. And, in the Isles of Scilly, growers are confident that they will have plenty of daffodils for sale before Christmas.

But it's not all roses especially for the vendors of

winter underwear. "We need a cold spell soon to sell some overcoats and woollens before everybody starts saving their money for Christmas," an Oxford Street trader said in London yesterday.

Weather forecasters say the balmy November is set to continue at least until the middle of next week. Even a weekend cold front will leave temperatures above the seasonal norm. Last night's predicted minimum, above 10C in the south, was appreciably higher than the normal November reading of 8.7C.

Forecast, page 24

Blair refuses a 4.7pc 'ministerial' pay rise

By Arthur Leathley
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY Blair last night turned on the pressure on MPs to reject pay rises of 4.7 per cent for ministers by announcing that he would not be accepting a salary increase.

In a move that increased the prospect of an embarrassing Commons defeat for the Government next week, the Labour leader made clear that he opposed the award of a pay rise well above inflation. Under rises approved by the Cabinet on Thursday, Mr

Blair would receive a £2,908 rise almost in line with that awarded to Cabinet ministers. His colleagues said last night that Mr Blair considered the increase to be "wrong when millions are having no increase at all". His stance increased pressure on Labour MPs to vote against the increases. MPs will be given a free vote. Several Tory MPs also voiced concern.

The Commons vote comes weeks after health ministers recommended that doctors, nurses, dentists and midwives receive no automatic pay rise.

Geoghegan-Quinn trails badly as 40 MPs pledge support for Finance Minister

Ahern on brink of victory in Irish leadership battle

By NICHOLAS WATT, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

BERTIE Ahern, Ireland's Finance Minister, is expected to succeed Albert Reynolds as leader of Fianna Fail today, paving the way for negotiations with opposition parties to form a new coalition government.

More than half of the Fianna Fail Parliamentary party were reported last night to have pledged their support for Mr Ahern. His rival, Maire Geoghegan-Quinn, the Justice Minister, was trailing badly.

It was unclear whether today's election will resolve the political crisis in Dublin after conflicting signals from Labour, Fianna Fail's former coalition partner, over whether it would rejoin its former government colleagues. Dick Spring, the Labour leader and former Deputy Prime Minister, said he would keep an "open mind" on entering negotiations with the new Fianna Fail leader.

However, other Labour MPs said they would have difficulty working with Fianna Fail again after they walked out of Cabinet in a row over a legal appointment.

Up to 40 of Fianna Fail's 67 MPs are understood to have pledged their support for Mr Ahern, and last night he won the backing of David Andrews, a Cabinet colleague.

One party source said: "We have 40 definite votes for Bertie. We have around 50 promises but you always subtract 10 when you're dealing with issues like this."

Mr Ahern, 43, who is regarded as one of the most able ministers, declared yesterday that he would build on Mr Reynolds' achievements in the Northern Ireland peace process if he won. Brian Lenihan, the former Fianna Fail Deputy Prime Minister, added his support yesterday. He said: "Electoral he is ideally located to strengthen party support and he personally has the negotiating and



Reynolds' left successor with job of reconciliation

consensual skills that are so required for national leadership."

Mrs Geoghegan-Quinn, 44, also pledged that she would be committed to the Northern Ireland peace process. She said: "The peace process is the most important, fundamental issue that will face the leader of Fianna Fail and this country in the years ahead."

The new leader will face awkward negotiations with Labour after Mr Spring walked out of the Cabinet last week after Mr Reynolds overrode his objections and appointed Harry Whelan, the former Attorney General, as President of the High Court. Charlie McCreery, one of Fianna Fail's strategists, underlined the difficulties when he said: "If anyone thinks it is going to be easy for Fianna Fail and Labour to come together again, they should think again. It is going to be very difficult, irrespective of who becomes leader."

There was speculation that Fianna Fail may prefer a spell on the backbenches and that Labour might enter a "rainbow coalition" with Fine Gael and other opposition parties. However, relations between Labour and Fine Gael are so frosty that a general election cannot be ruled out.

Support in Dublin holds key to power for Ahern

BERTIE Ahern, Finance Minister in the collapsed Irish coalition, is the clear favourite to succeed Albert Reynolds when Fianna Fail elects a new leader today (Nicholas Watt writes).

Up to 40 of the party's 67 MPs are said to have pledged their support for the MP for Dublin Central who has built up a strong power base in the city over regular pints of Guinness in his constituency's many pubs.

A string of leading party figures, including ministers, said that Mr Ahern would have the best chance of uniting the party. They also had an eye on his support in Dublin, a crucial battleground in the next general election.

But in a gesture to his opponent, Mr Ahern denied that his victory was assured. He said: "There is a long way to go. But I am very happy to have strong support."

Mr Ahern, 43, who was first elected to the Dail in 1977, will also appeal to Sinn Féin whose leaders have said they are worried that the crisis in Dublin will harm the peace process. His father, Con, fought with the Cork 3rd Brigade of the IRA in the 1919-21 War of Independence and later became a staunch supporter of Fianna Fail.

Mr Ahern pledged yesterday to continue Mr Reynolds' approach to Northern Ireland



- Bertie Ahern
- Claim to fame: protégé of former leader Charles Haughey. He carefully cultivates a down-to-earth image
- Motto: "Avoid conflict at any cost"
- Goals: To maintain Fianna Fail's commitment to the Ulster peace process and build on Ireland's strong economic growth
- Personal: Father of two. Separated from his wife, Miriam, and lives with partner Cecilia Larkin. Domestic life is the only stumbling block in his leadership bid

and to support his stance over the negotiations with Britain over the framework document on the future of Northern Ireland.

However, Mr Ahern's impeccable political credentials may be undermined by his domestic life. He left his wife some years ago to live with another woman. Divorce is banned in Ireland and Mr Ahern, who is on Fianna Fail's liberal wing, is in favour of reform.

Justice Minister joins the contest as underdog

MAIRE Geoghegan-Quinn, Ireland's formidable Justice Minister, starts as underdog in today's contest for the Fianna Fail leadership (Nicholas Watt writes). Two recent political miscalculations and her late entry to the race have hampered her chances of becoming Ireland's first woman Taoiseach. The difficulty of her task was underlined when Willie O'Dea, her deputy at Justice, endorsed Bertie Ahern.

Mrs Geoghegan-Quinn, 44, married with two sons, offered to resign after her department was linked with the dispute over the delay in dealing with extradition warrants against a priest who sexually abused children. She survived but in a weakened position.

A week ago she rapidly reversed her decision to release nine IRA prisoners after the killing of a postal worker in Newry, Co Down. Her prompt action was widely praised but her department's handling of the prisoners' issue was criticised when the names of the nine leaked out to the surprise of officials.

She pledged yesterday that the Northern Ireland peace process would be one of her main priorities if she won. "Whoever leads Fianna Fail... should be fully committed to... the peace process because it is the most important, fundamental issue that will face this



- Maire Geoghegan-Quinn
- Claim to fame: De-criminalised homosexuality last year
- Quote: "I believe we have to represent the core values that have been dear to us as a party, like the language and culture, like being a committed European, like the republican tradition"
- Goals: To build on the peace process. Liberal on social reform. Position unclear on divorce
- Personal: Lives with husband, John Quinn, and two sons

country in the years ahead," she said.

She is one of Fianna Fail's most effective performers on the stump and became one of Mr Reynolds' most trusted ministers. It is understood he delayed his resignation as party leader to give her time to prepare her election bid.

She became the first woman Cabinet minister in the Irish Republic when Charles Haughey appointed her in 1979 at the age of 29.

Armed robber shot dead after row

A man died yesterday after being blasted with a sawn-off shotgun as two robbers were seen arguing about their haul.

The man was given surgery in the street but died shortly after being flown to hospital. The dead man was believed to have been one of the robbers who stole £7,500 in wages from a thread factory in Stoke Newington, north London. They were then seen arguing about the money in a nearby yard. A sawn-off shotgun was found at the scene.

Spicer successor

Oliver Lewin has been chosen to succeed Sir James Spicer when he retires as MP for Dorset West at the next General Election. Mr Lewin worked in Baroness Thatcher's Downing St policy unit. Sir James had a majority of 8,010 at the last election.

Lilley loses case

Peter Lilley, the Social Security Secretary, was not entitled to recover the £57 that Rena Mulvey, of Glasgow, owed to the Social Fund after her bankruptcy by deducting £7 a week from her income support, the Court of Session in Edinburgh ruled.

Legal aid sought

More than 400 veterans of the 1919 Gulf War who claim to be suffering from a syndrome that causes sickness, loss of memory and excessive pain in the joints are now seeking legal aid to fight for compensation from the Ministry of Defence.

Staff overpaid

Up to 350 Liverpool City Council workers were mistakenly overpaid by a total of £1 million because of accounting errors. The council has begun an investigation into the overpayments for engineering staff. A senior financial manager has been suspended.

Vatican delay

Proposals for a "fast track" to Roman Catholicism for married Anglican clergy who cannot accept the ordination of women have not yet been agreed by the Vatican. It was disclosed yesterday. A dispensation is needed from Rome to allow married priests.

Libel damages

George Galloway, the Labour MP, received an apology in the High Court and libel damages over false claims in *The Sunday Telegraph* that he was arrested and dismissed for "disorderly behaviour after a whisky bask". The paper confused him with another MP.

Warbler find

The Yellow Rumped Warbler, a rare visitor from America, has been spotted in Eastville Park, Bristol, drawing a crowd of bird-watchers. The RSPB said: "Something like this is the find of a lifetime." The bird should be heading south towards South America.

A photograph that appeared on page 7 yesterday was not of Kani Yilmaz, a Kurdish guerrilla leader, as stated in the caption. We apologise for the error.



"Burly men with Belfast accents and vicious haircuts" stood guard on the pavement

Bodyguards lend weight to image of statesman Adams

By BILL FROST

GERRY Adams was fêted in London as the latest literary lion yesterday by a small and carefully selected audience who paid £2 for the privilege of hearing the Sinn Féin president discuss the difficulties he faced as a writer.

Many went to Waterstone's bookshop in Charing Cross Road, but not all were granted an audience. Burly men with Belfast accents and vicious haircuts held back *The Times* and others who were refused admission to what had been billed as a public book signing session.

Mr Adams had emerged smiling from a three-limousine cavalcade to acknowledge the cheers of a partisan crowd which greeted him like

a Nobel Prize winner. They came from Kilburn, Birmingham, and even Chicago to shake the Sinn Féin president's hand and buy a copy of *Selected Writings* (£7.95 with the admission cost deductible).

As the signing session began, a metal grille was pulled down over the entrance to the bookshop. On the other side of the road at a sixth story window, Special Branch photographers with long lenses snapped away furiously at the crowd.

The gentlemen with the haircuts positioned themselves strategically on the pavement and tried to be inconspicuous. Uniformed police on the scene kept a

discreet distance, moving on some vagrants.

By mid-afternoon Mr Adams' hectic programme dictated he must make his excuses and leave. The haircuts fanned out across the pavement looking every inch like presidential secret service men. Mr Adams emerged to acknowledge more cheers. There was a lone dissenting voice, "Bloody murderer," a man wearing a poppy shouted.

Book lovers told how Mr Adams spoke modestly of his literary ability and shortcomings. "I don't know if I have accomplished the techniques of the writing," he said, adding that his most pressing problem was time.

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Weinstock 'sacked' manager after 31-year friendship

BY A STAFF REPORTER

LORD Weinstock, one of Britain's wealthiest industrialists, sacked his farm manager after a 31-year friendship because his country estate was predicted to make a small loss, a tribunal was told yesterday.

The 70-year-old peer was so close to Graham Stewart, 58, that he paid for his three children to go to private schools and allowed him to live rent-free in a five-bedroom house on his grounds. Lord Weinstock, managing director of GEC, dismissed Mr Stewart without a promised six-figure golden handshake after becoming upset by a report predicting a £4,400 loss at his country estate, it was claimed.

Not only was Mr Stewart's family ordered to leave their home on the Bowden Park estate in Lacock, Wiltshire, but the £15,000-a-year farm manager was asked to repay £3,000 lent by Lord Weinstock so that he could buy shares in GEC.

The two men had been close during their long association, during which they established

a potato-growing business. "I have, however, seen his treatment of employees could depend on a whim," Mr Stewart told the tribunal in Bristol. "He is an exceedingly powerful man who controls everything about him with a firm grip. He has, in my experience, a habit of only seeing those parts of a story which coincide with his views or of convincing himself that the facts are as he wants them to be, rather than as they really are."

Mr Stewart acknowledged the industrialist's past generosity. "From an early stage Lord Weinstock and I were on very good terms," he said. "I believe that we were on much closer terms than those normal between a landlord and his farm manager."

"Lord Weinstock and his wife came over for supper. He was always a pleasant man to speak to. He has been generous in paying for the education of my children and I had got on with him very well."

Mr Stewart was applying to the tribunal for leave to appeal

for unfair dismissal. He is also claiming compensation for the promised golden handshake. He lost his job in March last year but missed the three-month deadline to apply to the tribunal.

He explained that he had not dared file for unfair dismissal because it might have hampered negotiations over a settlement. "I felt that, once I was seen to be acting in a hostile fashion by making an application to an industrial tribunal, I would get nothing on a voluntary basis," he said.

"The prospect of a farm manager litigating against one of the wealthiest and most powerful businessmen in Britain was daunting. I thought he would be fair but obviously he was not. I still hoped we would patch it up."

Mr Stewart said the retirement package involved continued rent-free residence and Lord Weinstock selling his share in the potato firm at a reduced price to reflect his friend's loyalty. None of these provisions was honoured. "I was very upset at the lack of progress and I said this was almost blackmail," Mr Stewart said. "I was being continually strung along with no concrete proposals being made, the unstated threat being that if I was not helpful over the handover it would be worse for me."

Andrew Hillier, Lord Weinstock's barrister, said: "Lord Weinstock has been kind to himself to Graham Stewart over the years of their association. But it was Mr Stewart's decision to momentarily leave his job as farm manager to concentrate on the potato business. All bets were off and Lord Weinstock wanted to have his money."

Stephen Berry, the tribunal chairman, reserved judgment on whether to allow a full industrial tribunal.



Weinstock and Stewart: "We were on closer terms than those normal between landlord and manager"



Sir Andrew with Glenn Close at the cast party after *Sunset Boulevard* attracted rapturous praise on its opening night on Broadway

Lloyd Webber basks in warm glow of *Sunset*

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

FUELLED by a flood of controversy, breathless hype and the largest advance ticket sales in theatre history, Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical *Sunset Boulevard* rolled on to Broadway on Thursday night to a rapturous reception.

Glenn Close's performance as the ageing and demented movie actress Norma Desmond "brought the first-night crowd to its feet for one of the most wildly enthusiastic standing ovations in recent memory", the *Daily News* reported.

Billy Wilder, director of the original 1950 film starring Gloria Swanson, took the stage with Sir Andrew at the end of the performance, the first time he has given his approval to the stage adaptation of his film. "The fact that he endorsed me in that way, I'll remember all my life," Sir Andrew said.

The opening night was followed by a lavish £170,000 party for 1,200 people in the Rainbow Rooms at the top of Manhattan's Rockefeller Centre. The £9 million production, the most expensive in Broadway history, has taken £25 million in advance ticket sales and promoters say they are confident *Sunset Boulevard* will prove to be one of the most profitable productions ever. Sir Andrew said he was

"reeling" from the enthusiastic response of New York critics, who have shown scant mercy to the British composer in the past. "I just got my first good review in the *New York Times*," he said after the opening performance, a barbed reference to the paper's vitriolic former theatre critic Frank Rich, perhaps his fiercest detractor.

"Ms Close is the real mesmeriser," David Richards enthused in yesterday's *New York Times*, "and she can probably start clearing place on her mantel right now for the Tony Award she's bound to win."

The designer, Ralph Lauren pronounced the production "the most beautiful thing I've ever seen" while Ms Close said that her performance (while not a million miles removed from her celebrated role in the film *Fatal Attraction*) had made her realise "the stage is my true home".

The production has been dogged by the collision of monumental egos, including the successive hiring and firing by Sir Andrew of leading ladies Patti LaPore and Faye Dunaway. A £4 million lawsuit filed by Ms Dunaway against the composer and his Really Useful Company is still pending in Los Angeles.

Royal Mint hijack man jailed for ten years

A LEADING member of a gang that stole £300,000 by hijacking a Royal Mint lorry was jailed for ten years yesterday. Robert Rogers, 40, had played an important part in organising the "well planned and carefully executed" crime, which was Britain's first coin bullion robbery, the judge said.

The driver was tricked out of his lorry as he approached Barclays Bank's vaults in Shoreditch, east London, in September last year. He was kidnapped, hooded and held captive for four hours.

The robbers were surprised by the denomination of the currency they had stolen: three million 10p pieces weighing almost 20 tonnes. "This caused very great problems in terms of disposal," the judge said.

Rogers, 36, from Islington, north London, was convicted at an earlier trial of conspiracy to rob and conspiracy to kidnap. The judge said he accepted there was no evidence that he was at the scene.

He was caught the day after the robbery when he was secretly recorded, during an unconnected undercover operation, speaking of his role in the raid. Flying Squad officers arrested him hours later as more than half the haul was being driven through Barking, Essex, in a hire van.

Solicitor arrested at remand centre

BY PAUL WILKINSON

A SOLICITOR was arrested after a proscribed drug, believed to be cannabis, was allegedly discovered in her handbag when she was visiting The Wolds remand centre on Humberside. Jackie Knights, 32, was held by staff at the privately run prison.

Drug squad officers raided her home in York shortly afterwards and arrested her husband, James Harrison, who works for the city council. The police also removed several items from the house.

Mrs Knights and her husband have since been released on police bail and a file is being prepared by Humberside Police for the Crown Prosecution Service. Mrs

Knights was detained on Wednesday afternoon by staff of Group 4, which runs The Wolds, the county's first private prison. They then called in police to make an arrest. The substance, which has been sent for analysis, is believed to have been inside a cigarette packet.

The centre, which opened two years ago, has earned a reputation for a drugs problem with detainees claiming it is easy to obtain illegal substances.

Mrs Knights works for the York firm of solicitors Harrowell Shafte. Yesterday John Yeomans, the senior partner, said: "I am aware of the facts relating to an incident which took place at the Wolds remand centre on Wednesday involving a member of our staff, Mrs Jackie Knights. I have received a full explanation from Mrs Knights and understand that further inquiries are being made. Mrs Knights has my full support and I have no further comment to make."

Humberside Police have confirmed that a woman, aged 32, was arrested at The Wolds following her detention by Group 4 warders. They said the arrest followed the recovery of "a substance" found among property in her possession. It was being analysed and the woman had been bailed.



Knights released on police bail

US publisher pays £2m for Briton's first novel

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

A BRITISH author has sold the American publishing rights to his unfinished book for £2 million, the highest price ever paid for a first novel. Nicholas Evans, a former journalist and film producer, has now broken two industry records in less than a month.

In October the actor Robert Redford bought the film rights to Mr Evans's novel *The Horse Whisperer* for almost £2 million, which made it the most valuable film deal for a first novel. That deal set the stage for a ferocious bidding battle between American publishers.

On Wednesday night Dell Publishing could name rivals

during a frantic 48-hour telephone auction, finally agreeing to pay \$3.15 million for the hardback and paperback rights in North America. The book will be published in Britain by Transworld Publishers.

"It's marvellous, but I want to keep my head clear until I've finished the book," Mr Evans, 44, said yesterday from his home in Stockwell, south London. He said he was three quarters of the way through his manuscript and hoped to complete the book by the end of the year. Delacorte Press, the hardback wing of Dell, plans to publish next autumn. *The Horse Whisperer*, set

in the mountains of Montana, is the story of Tom Booker, a man with an unusual gift for taming wild horses. Redford, who bought the film rights for his own studio and who has decided to direct and play the lead role, said: "It's very compelling and is a unique love story. It has all the elements that I look for."

Carol Baron, the president and publisher of Dell, who will edit *The Horse Whisperer*, said the first 200 pages of Mr Evans's work-in-progress at the Frankfurt Book Fair. "I couldn't turn the pages fast enough," she said. "I just can't wait to read the whole book."



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The winning numbers will be drawn live tonight on the draw show, which starts at 7pm on BBC1. If your set of six numbers match the six main numbers drawn, in any order, you'll be one of the jackpot winners.

Match five main numbers, plus the bonus number, and you've won the next biggest prize, an estimated £100,000. Matching five main numbers wins you an estimated £1,500. Four main numbers, an estimated £65. Even matching three main numbers wins you ten pounds.

Keep your fingers crossed and you never know, tonight could be your lucky night.



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هكذا من الأمل

Relatives condemn 'travesty of justice' in case of British tourist shot at service station

Retrial ordered as Florida murder jury fails to agree

By A STAFF REPORTER



John Crumie is taken back to jail after the decision.

RELATIVES of a British tourist killed in Florida criticised the American jury system yesterday after his alleged murderer was ordered to face a retrial.

The jury trying John "Billy Joe" Crumie, 17, was unable to reach a verdict after six hours of often noisy deliberations in the courthouse at Monticello, Florida. The jury included a former teacher of the defendant and a former classmate.

Crumie was accused of murdering Gary Colley, 34, a van driver from Wilsden, West Yorkshire, during a botched robbery attempt in September last year. Mr Colley's travelling companion, Margaret Jagger, 36, from Bradford, was wounded.

Mr Colley's father, Terry, 58, of Brighouse, West Yorkshire, said yesterday: "I'm angry about what happened with the jury set-up. If they had the trial away from that small town a retrial might not

be needed. This wouldn't happen in England."

Ms Jagger's mother condemned the retrial decision as a "travesty of justice". Muriel Jagger, 67, of Bradford, said that her daughter, who gave evidence at the trial, had been too upset to talk for long about it. "She was heartbroken. I did not learn until this morning that two members of the jury knew Crumie through school. It wasn't fair."

"Margaret has been having counselling all this time and trying to cope. It has been a big ordeal for her to go over there and give evidence. It's a different world to going there on holiday. She won't relish going back for the retrial, but she will do what she has to do."

Crumie was accused of killing Mr Colley during an early morning robbery attempt at a highway services area 30 miles east of the state capital, Tallahassee. The teenager, who faces a life sentence,



Margaret Jagger leaving court. She must return to give evidence at next year's retrial.

testified that he was at home when the killing happened.

The jurors could be heard arguing behind closed doors about the lack of physical evidence and the identification of Crumie by a witness. Crumie will remain in jail until the new trial, which is likely to be early next year.

Ms Jagger burst into tears

when the retrial decision was announced. She telephoned Mr Colley's parents almost immediately afterwards to tell them what had happened.

Mr Colley's mother, Brenda Armitage, 56, from Shipley, West Yorkshire, said: "We just want it over. It's been awful and it looks like we will just have to go through it all again."

We have had to wait over one year for this. How much longer are we going to have to wait for justice?

"I feel terrible for Margaret. She was upset on the phone when she told us the result. She has had to relive that night once in court, now she will have to relive it again. It must be horrible for her."

MORE SPORT ON MONDAY



G'DAY BRUCE?
Rob Hughes on the Grobbelaar circus in Southampton

THE MUD PACK
Oliver Holt reports from Chester on the RAC rally

WINNER TAKES ALL
Rugby League: the Australian finale

PLUS
On Tuesday:
20-page guide to independent and state schools

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

Dealer West	Love all
♠ 10 9 5 4 ♥ 8 7 3 2 ♦ K 5 ♣ 10 8	♠ 4 7 6 2 ♥ K Q J 9 4 ♦ A 5 4 ♣ 5 4
♠ Q ♥ 10 5 ♦ Q J 10 8 7 6 2 ♣ J 2	♠ A K 8 3 ♥ A 8 ♦ A K Q 9 8 7 3 ♣ A K Q 9 8 7 3
W ♠ Pass ♥ Pass ♦ Pass ♣ Pass	E ♠ Pass ♥ Pass ♦ Pass ♣ All pass
S ♠ (1) ♥ (2) ♦ (3) ♣ (4)	S ♠ (1) ♥ (2) ♦ (3) ♣ (4)
Opening lead ♠ 10	

By ROBERT SHEEHAN
BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

I held the South hand last week, the best hand I have held when playing for money for about two years. The bidding has several points of interest.

(1) When Three Diamonds came round to me, it seemed best to start with Four Diamonds. As a Double would be for take out, and is the correct bid on all three suited hands, it releases the cue-bid for use to show more shapely types. It is correct to cue-bid (ie bid the opponents' suit) on powerful one- and two-suited hands.

(2) North's Four Heart bid looks a little odd, but he wanted to keep the bidding low to cater for all possible two-suited hands with South.

(3) A reasonable gamble. It is

very difficult to bid these hands scientifically.

(4) Clearly the opposition are sacrificing in Six Diamonds, so my Pass is a so-called "Rousing Pass". It means that I haven't completely given up on higher contracts — with a less good hand I would double Six Diamonds.

(5) North cannot be sure that I have a second suit, and as his only card above a jack is in the opposition's suit he reasonably enough "takes the money".

We only took four tricks against Six Diamonds, for 500 points. When West got the lead after ruffing the second round of spades he achieved the ambition of a lifetime by leading the two of diamonds and playing the four from dummy when North played the three.

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

London threatened

With one round to go in the match in the French capital between teams from London and Paris, the London side needs a miracle to avoid defeat. The current score stands at 39-33 in favour of Paris. London will have to win in the last round by the score of 7.5-1.5 in order to tie the match.

Hopes dashed

The one bright spark for the London team was the performance of Andrew Kinsman, who was on the brink of achieving an international master performance. Unfortunately his prospects were dashed when he lost the following gruelling encounter in round eight.

White: Chomet

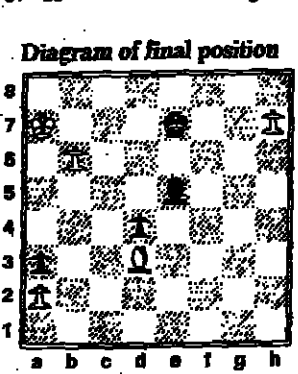
Black: Kinsman

Paris v London, 1994

French Defence

- 1 e4
- 2 d3
- 3 Nd2
- 4 Ng3
- 5 c3
- 6 e5
- 7 d4
- 8 Bb5
- 9 Be7
- 10 O-O
- 11 Re1
- 12 Nd4
- 13 Qg4
- 14 N2g3
- 15 Bf1
- 16 h4
- 17 Be3
- 18 Re2
- 19 Bc3
- 20 Ne2
- 21 Ng3
- 22 b3

- 23 cxd4
- 24 g4
- 25 Qd4
- 26 Qxg6
- 27 f4
- 28 Bc2
- 29 b3
- 30 Re1
- 31 Re6
- 32 Rxe6
- 33 Kg2
- 34 Bg8
- 35 Rb8
- 36 cxd5
- 37 Kf3
- 38 h5
- 39 Ke2
- 40 Rh1
- 41 Bc3
- 42 Rd1
- 43 Kf2
- 44 Re1
- 45 Kxe1
- 46 Ke2
- 47 Kf3
- 48 Ke4
- 49 b4
- 50 g4
- 51 g5
- 52 b5
- 53 Ke5
- 54 h6
- 55 g4h6
- 56 Kd5
- 57 h7
- 58 Ke6
- 59 Kd6
- 60 Ke7
- 61 b6



Winning Move.
Weekend, page 29

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BARCLAYS

Calman accuses TV cot death show of misleading parents

By Nick Nuttall, Technology Correspondent

THE Chief Medical Officer last night accused a television programme about cot deaths of offering potentially dangerous advice to parents worried about their infants. Dr Kenneth Calman said research in *Central Television's The Cook Report* was "limited, inadequate and flawed".

The programme, screened on Thursday, alleged that some babies were being poisoned in their cots after high levels of antimony, a flame-proof chemical with which mattresses were impregnated, was found in the tissue of cot death victims. It advised parents to cover a baby's mattress in polythene or remove the mattress altogether. Several

stores withdrew their stocks of mattresses as a result.

But Dr Calman said the programme was wrong to imply that cot mattresses were the only possible source of antimony. Trace levels were widely distributed in food, water and tobacco smoke, he said.

He warned that wrapping mattresses in polythene was likely to increase the risk of babies becoming entangled and suffocating. He also said that covering the mattress in more blankets could increase the risk of a cot death. Experts believe that babies can die if they overheat and Dr Calman said additional blankets could trigger this. The Chief Medi-

cal Officer spoke after discussing *The Cook Report* and its allegations with a panel of senior medical researchers and chemists including Professor Paul Turner, who conducted the Health Department's original investigations into links between flame-retardants and cot deaths.

The scientists who researched claims that bed-wetting caused a naturally occurring fungus to break down fire-chemicals said they had been unable to trigger toxic fumes in the laboratory.

Dr Calman said: "The *Cook Report* was an inappropriate way of presenting new scientific data. Television programmes dealing with matters of deep public interest have a responsibility to deal seriously and responsibly with their material. I much regret the confusion caused to parents." He said he would be convening an expert group to examine antimony.

Roger Cook said later: "With regard to our testing, we always said it was limited. But it was not inadequate. All mothers want to hear is when the Government is going to do its own tests."

Nigel Griffiths, the shadow consumer spokesman, denounced the Government and said he had little confidence in the health department's medical advisors. Mr Griffiths, along with more than 20 other MPs, has demanded a House of Commons debate into the actions of Virginia Bottomley, the Health Secretary, and Dr Calman.

Yesterday solicitors for the law firm Leigh Day said they were considering legal action against manufacturers and the Department of Health after being contacted by families whose children had died in cot deaths. John Lewis, Toys'R'Us and the House of Fraser said they were following the lead taken by Boots, which cleared shelves of mattresses on Wednesday.



Barry Legg arrives at Westminster Town Hall with his wife Margaret for the district auditor's hearing yesterday

Tory MP denies involvement in Westminster 'gerrymandering'

By Ian Murray, Community Correspondent

WESTMINSTER council's home sales policy was devised to save money, not for gerrymandering, a Tory MP and former councillor told the public hearing in the matter yesterday.

Barry Legg, who resigned as council Chief Whip before winning Milton Keynes South West in the last general election, is named by John Magill, the district auditor, as one of a "triumvirate" behind an alleged vote-rigging scheme which cost local tax payers £21.25 million. With Dame Shirley Porter, then council leader, and her deputy David Weekes, he is alleged to have been a "driving force" behind the plan to sell homes in eight marginal wards in order to win the 1990 council election.

If Mr Magill confirms his provisional findings, Mr Legg would be disqualified from public office. Mr

Legg told the inquiry yesterday that the Tory landslide in 1990 was largely due to Westminster having set the second-lowest community charge in the country and not because of its home sales policy.

He denied being part of a triumvirate or a member of a strategy group guiding the sales policy. "I totally reject the auditor's view that I was knowingly engaged in gerrymandering," he said.

Mr Legg said he could see nothing wrong in adopting a good sales policy if it also had electoral advantage. However, he denied selecting wards for homes sales and regarded talk at party meetings of targeting marginal wards as "political rhetoric". He said: "Usually I discounted political rhetoric because I had heard so much of it. At the end of the day, we have to take decisions properly in committee."

He did not recollect in detail a discussion paper by Dame Shirley setting out an action programme for the policy.

"I would have been sceptical of the electoral targets mentioned, but I did not consider that there was anything improper about extending designated sales which was, I believed, a good policy because it increased the opportunities for home ownership."

Mr Legg repeatedly said he had no recollection of key documents or meetings where the policy was discussed. He was too busy as Chief Whip and otherwise to pay much attention to what was happening. He was not on the housing committee and took no part in decisions leading to the policy being agreed.

Andrew Arden, QC, representing the objectors who raised the homes sales policy with the auditor, cross-examined Mr Legg, said: "I find it difficult to understand how you can have a policy dear to the heart of the leader which had a major impact on the budget and yet you don't know much about it." The hearing continues next week.

Sunglasses shooting man jailed

A printer was jailed for ten years yesterday for shooting a man during a dispute over a pair of £75 Rayban sunglasses. Colin Mason, 25, pulled a revolver on Patrick Carper, 24, who denied having taken the glasses from Mason's car. Mason, of Walthamstow, east London, was cleared of attempted murder but found guilty of wounding, blackmail and firearms charges.

Fatal treatment

Brian Richardson, 35, died from a heart attack caused by chemotherapy for bowel cancer at Christie Hospital when earlier surgery had removed all traces of the disease, an inquest in Manchester was told. Verdict: misadventure.

Bed for prisoner

A secure hospital bed has been found for a mentally ill defendant after a judge threatened 11 days ago to order the Health Secretary to appear in court to explain the lack of psychiatric care for the man, who had been held in jail since June.

Stags in space

Satellites that tracked soldiers in the Gulf War are to be used to monitor two stags to find out which habitats are at risk from over-grazing, in research by Martin Gorman, of Aberdeen University, with Scottish Natural Heritage.

Bells of hell

A bellringer suffered a dislocated shoulder after becoming entangled in his rope, lifted into the air and bantered against a church wall. Joe Cooper, 56, was ringing bells at Long Melford, Suffolk, when the accident happened.

Pill cancer risk

Women who have taken the Pill may have a bigger risk of developing one type of cervical cancer, adenocarcinoma, according to a study of 1954 sufferers in Los Angeles. It may help to explain a rise in cervical cancer in the US.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT FROM BT

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Travellers to capital face 5 per cent rises but long-distance costs unchanged

London commuters bear brunt of BR price increases

By TIM JONES
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

COMMUTERS into London bore the brunt of fare increases announced by British Rail yesterday and a rail users' group gave a warning that the rises would drive more passengers away from the railways.

While thousands of long-distance fares will be unchanged, those for commuters into London will rise by 5 per cent, or by 3 per cent on the five routes where punctuality has been below 87.5 per cent. Those five routes serve Brighton, Portsmouth, Orpington, Dover and Watford.

London Underground fares will rise by an average of 5 per cent, with an increase in the cheapest fare from 90p to £1. Most of the charges will not be introduced until February 5, although the London Travelcard element, by which BR customers can also use Underground trains and buses, will be introduced from January 8 and will cost an extra £1.70 a week.

Many London commuters were angry at the increases.



Norris: lowest rise in fares for eight years

Geoffrey Hurbert, a design artist from Cambridge who faces a rise in his yearly season ticket from £2,528 to £2,654, said: "It may not seem very much but it appears to be part of a relentless series of above-inflation rises. My rail travelling costs are now becoming a disproportionate part of my income and it is becoming critical. I know some commuters who cannot afford the annual card, and for

them the increase in the weekly price from £63.20 to £66.36 is serious."

Desmond White, who pays £67 a week to travel from Banbury to London, was dismayed to learn that he would face a rise of £3.35 a week. "In addition I will be paying the extra £1.70 a week for the Travelcard, so it is beginning to bite. My message to the Government is that I will be getting back into my car. It may not be environmentally friendly, but it is much cheaper."

However, Julian Webb, from Colchester, thought his weekly increase of £2.93 from £8.70 was acceptable. He said: "It is a reasonably good service and an increase of about the price of a pint and a half of beer seems fair."

There will be no increases in prices on InterCity East Coast, InterCity Cross Country, leisure fares on InterCity Great Western and non-season tickets on the Midland Main Line. InterCity Anglo-Scottish and sleeper fares will also be held at their present levels.

Steven Norris, the transport minister, said: "This is going

FARE RISES			
OPERATOR	CHANGE OF FARE	OPERATOR	CHANGE OF FARE
Anglia Railways	No increase	Network SouthCentral	5% on South London lines, 3% Sussex Coast
Cardiff Valleys	3%	Regional Railways NE	No increase
Regional Railways Central	No increase	North London railways	5% Nonhampton line, 3% North London
Chiltern Lines	5%	Regional Railways NW	No increase
InterCity CrossCountry	No increase	ScotRail	No increase on Strathclyde services, 3-4% increase on most other routes
InterCity East Coast	No increase	South Eastern	3%
Gatwick Express	3.5%	Regional Railways South Wales & West	No increase
Great Eastern	5%	South West Trains	5% South West lines, 3% Solent & Wessex
Great Western Trains	1.6%	Thameslink	5%
Isle of Wight	5%	W Anglia Great Northern	5%
LTS	5%	InterCity West Coast	3% no increase in Anglo-Scottish or sleeper fares or new fares introduced in 1994
Merseyrail Electrics	No increase		
InterCity Midland Main Line	4% on season tickets only		
Thames Trains	5%		



to be the lowest rise in cash terms in fares for eight years, an average in real terms of less than 3 per cent." He added that the signallers' strike "didn't do anybody any good. The railways lost a substantial amount of revenue but, as it happens, this increase is part

of a normal pattern of looking at fare adjustments that happen every year."

Michael Patterson, general secretary of the Central Rail Users' Consultative Committee, said: "Increases of well above the rate of inflation are wholly unjustifiable. While

lower than some of the increases in recent years, rises on this scale will serve only to drive more passengers away from using the trains at a time when the railways need to win back customers."

Railtrack sell-off, page 1

Heroism of canoe instructor may have saved lives

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

ONE of the instructors on the Lyme Bay canoeing expedition in which four teenagers died was praised in court yesterday for doing her "heroic best" while she and students were in the water.

Karen Gardner, 23, told Winchester Crown Court that she had been employed by Joseph Stoddart as a cleaner at the Hyde House Activity Centre, Wareham, Dorset, in 1991. She was asked to train as a multi-activity instructor at the Lyme Regis Challenge Centre, where Mr Stoddart was manager, in 1992.

Peter Kite, managing director of Active Learning and Leisure Limited, Mr Stoddart, and the firm OLL Limited, formerly Active Learning and Leisure Limited, deny four charges each of manslaughter.

Neil Butterfield, QC, for the prosecution, said Miss Gardner's actions may well have prevented further loss of life. Miss Gardner told the court that she enjoyed participating in sports but had not had great experience of the sport in which she was to be trained as an instructor. "I was a water-skiier, an athlete," she said.

Miss Gardner received more than a week's instruction at Lyme Regis in 1992 covering a wide variety of sporting disciplines, including abseil-

ing, archery, assault course, windsurfing and canoeing. She had been taught about general aspects of safety general, but could not recall whether she had received instructions on the safety aspects of canoeing. Miss Gardner admitted that she was a novice canoeist when she joined the Lyme Regis centre but said she had been taught the capsize drill and had practised sea canoeing on sheltered beaches around the Cobb.

Mr Justice Ognall adjourned the trial until Monday so Miss Gardner could deal in one sitting with the events of the day of the tragedy, in March 1993, saying he did not want her to have to mull it over during the weekend.

Earlier, the court heard how Anthony Mann, 23, the main instructor, had, when applying to work as a multi-activity instructor at the Lyme Regis centre, ticked the box marked "expert" in every sporting discipline except sea canoeing. The judge asked Mr Mann if he had not rather over-rated his ability. Mr Mann said he had not. He admitted, however, that he had contemplated halting the trip when one of the boys capsized after only a few minutes in the water. The trial continues on Monday.

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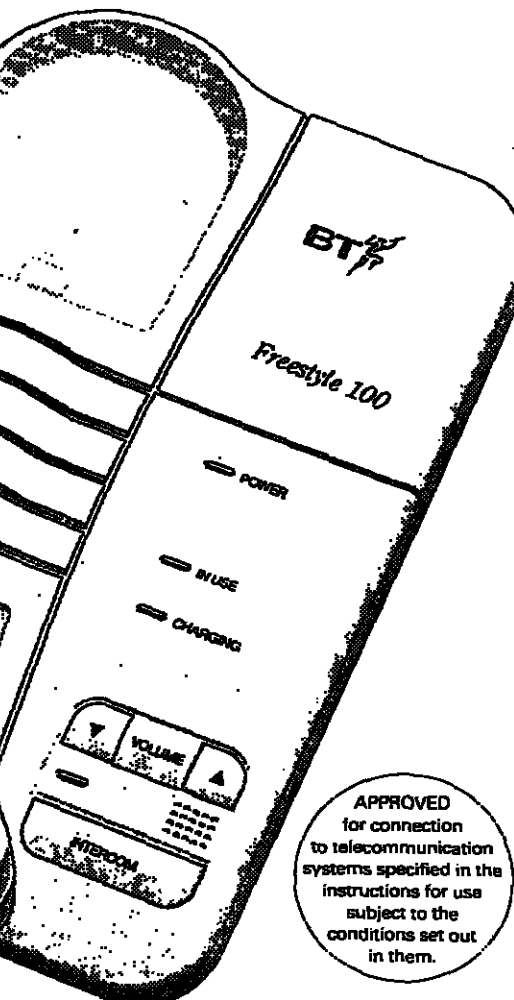
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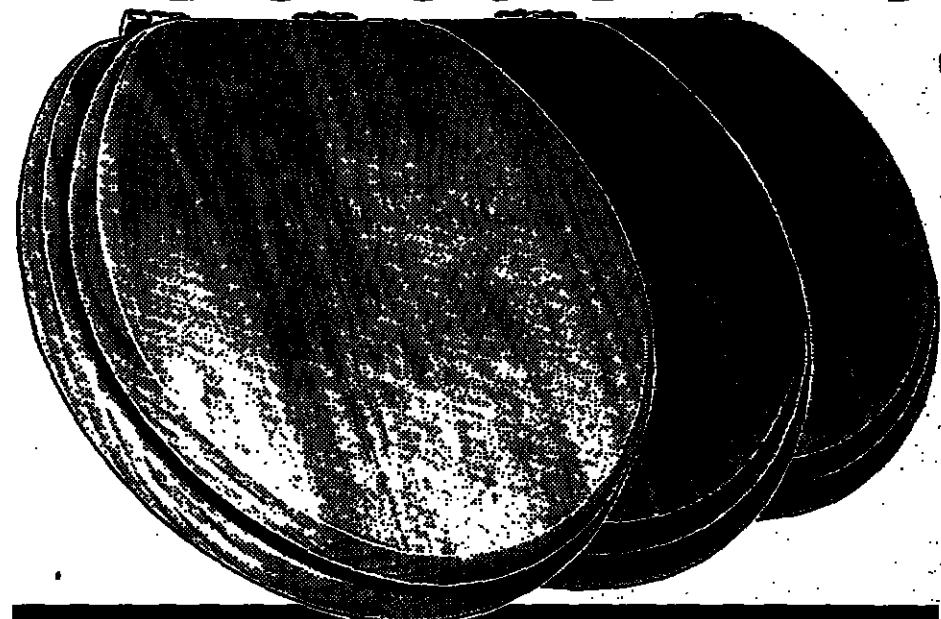
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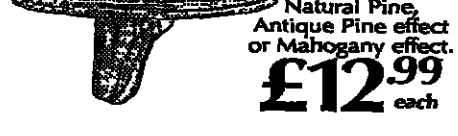


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MPs to seek relaxation of law on rabies quarantine

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

THE Government is under new pressure to abandon Britain's strict quarantine controls against rabies and to replace them with a system of vaccination and pet passports.

This is expected to be the central proposal of a report on rabies regulations to be released next Wednesday by the Commons select committee on agriculture, on which members of all parties sit.

William Waldegrave, the Agriculture Minister, refused yesterday to comment before the report's publication, but officials said they saw no

cally reduced in recent years by spraying the countryside with anti-rabies pellets.

Richard Alexander, a Tory member of the Commons committee, declined to say what his proposal was but said evidence had been heard from "very respectable sources" that vaccination would be effective in preventing the spread of rabies.

Some of the strongest calls for change came from Richard Halliwell, head of the department of veterinary clinical studies at the University of Edinburgh. He told the committee that quarantine encouraged the illegal import of dogs and cats. "The risk of introduction of disease due to smuggling of pets is frankly greater than that resulting from controlled movement under defined conditions," he said.

Quarantine could safely be dropped in most cases, Professor Halliwell suggested, provided importers could prove that animals had been vaccinated, that blood tests had shown that the vaccine had taken and that a system of "unambiguous identification" of animals existed.

This is thought to be close to what the committee will recommend. One idea is that microchip tags should be inserted in the scruff of dogs' necks. A scanner linked to a central computer would enable customs officers to "read" the animal's health history. That could then be checked against the animal's passport.

Britain is the only country in the European Union, apart from Ireland, which still has quarantine. There has been no indigenous case of human rabies anywhere in the European Union for at least 10 years.

Leading article, page 21

Suicidal father survived but killed his son

By A STAFF REPORTER

A DEPRESSED father killed his baby son in a bungled suicide attempt after his wife left him. Wayne Skerton tried to kill himself and his two boys in a fume-filled car and failed only because the engine overheated and seized up. A court was told yesterday.

Skerton, 25, and his oldest son Sam, 4, survived, but his baby Joshua, whose second birthday had been celebrated just four days before, was killed by brain damage from the carbon monoxide fumes. Just minutes before the suicide attempt Skerton had sat in his car writing suicide notes to his wife Debra and his parents, while the two children played outside at a Dartmoor beauty spot.

Plymouth Crown Court was told that he wrote to his wife: "I am so sorry it has come to this but I am hurting so much. I love you and the boys but you will not even give our marriage a chance. I miss you terribly and the thought of being a part-time dad to Sam and Joshua is tearing me apart. I love you. PS: At least this way I am with my two boys."

Skerton, of Plymouth, admitted manslaughter by reason of diminished responsibility and causing grievous bodily harm to the surviving boy. He will be sentenced on Monday. An order preventing the identification of Sam was lifted.

Ian Bullock, QC, for the prosecution, said: "The Crown accepted the manslaughter plea because doctors had found that Skerton was suffering from reactive depression at the time of the killing."

He said Skerton had married Debra in 1990 but the marriage had run into problems after he was made redundant several times and ran up debts. They



Debra and Wayne Skerton with their sons Sam, left, and Joshua, who died in his father's suicide attempt

separated in January 1994. On Joshua's birthday Skerton had gone to the family home in Brixton, near Plymouth, with presents. He had found his wife's new boyfriend there and had left in some distress.

Mr Bullock said that on the day of the killing Skerton had again gone to the house with presents for his wife and while there had seen a letter from solicitors dealing with the first steps of their divorce. "He then left the house with the children," Mr Bullock said. "He went to his parents

house and obtained a hosepipe, drove to Dartmoor National Park and connected it to the car, stuffing any remaining window space with clothing.

"The Crown says this was a deliberate attempt to kill himself and the children and was deliberate from the outset. Joshua was asleep when he left but he insisted on taking him and when he left the house he made a great show of saying goodbye to his wife and telling her he always loved her."

Mr Bullock said it was

clear Skerton had revved up the car's engine to speed up the flow of fumes but that this had had the effect of causing such a build-up of exhaust that the engine stopped. He eventually regained consciousness and, after failing to restart the car, he went to fetch help. Skerton and Sam eventually recovered but, despite oxygen treatment in a divers' decompression chamber, Joshua died four days later from brain damage.

Mr Anthony Donne, QC, for the defence, said: "Skerton was in such a state

of acute depression that he took the ultimate step of desperation and tried to kill himself and his two sons, who were the last human beings in the world he would harm, let alone kill, if in his right mind and thinking straight."

"The very facts of this case speak for themselves of the depth of hopelessness, loneliness and despair he reached on that tragic afternoon. The sentence will be far from the only punishment he has received and will receive in the future."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Identity of Aids doctor kept secret

A health authority refused to confirm the identity yesterday of a doctor who treated casualty patients and pregnant women before he died of Aids.

It is thought that he was Dr Simon Cayre, who worked in hospitals and surgeries around Plymouth before his death in a London hospital two weeks ago. Plymouth and Torbay health authority said it would be a breach of confidentiality to confirm his identity.

Crash victim dies

Gillian Tweddle, 28, who was badly hurt when her car was hit by a train on a level crossing near Teesside airport on Wednesday, died in Middlesbrough General Hospital.

Mozart on view

The London Mozart Players are to show television close-ups of the musicians on a screen behind the stage during a concert at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on November 30.

Murder hunt

Police launched a murder inquiry after a pensioner was found dead at his home in Shrewsbury. Robert Young, 73, who lived alone, had severe head injuries.

Cars recalled

Citroën is recalling all 44,500 of its Xantia models because of handbrake problems. Modifications have already been made to rectify the problem on the production line.

Eliot windfall

A first edition of T. S. Eliot's first published poems, *Prufrick and Other Observations*, fetched £1,760 at Christie's, west London. The vendor had bought it for £150.

Football charge

The Fulham footballer Tony Finnigan, 32, is due to appear before Bow Street magistrates today, charged with possession with intent to supply about a kilogram of heroin.

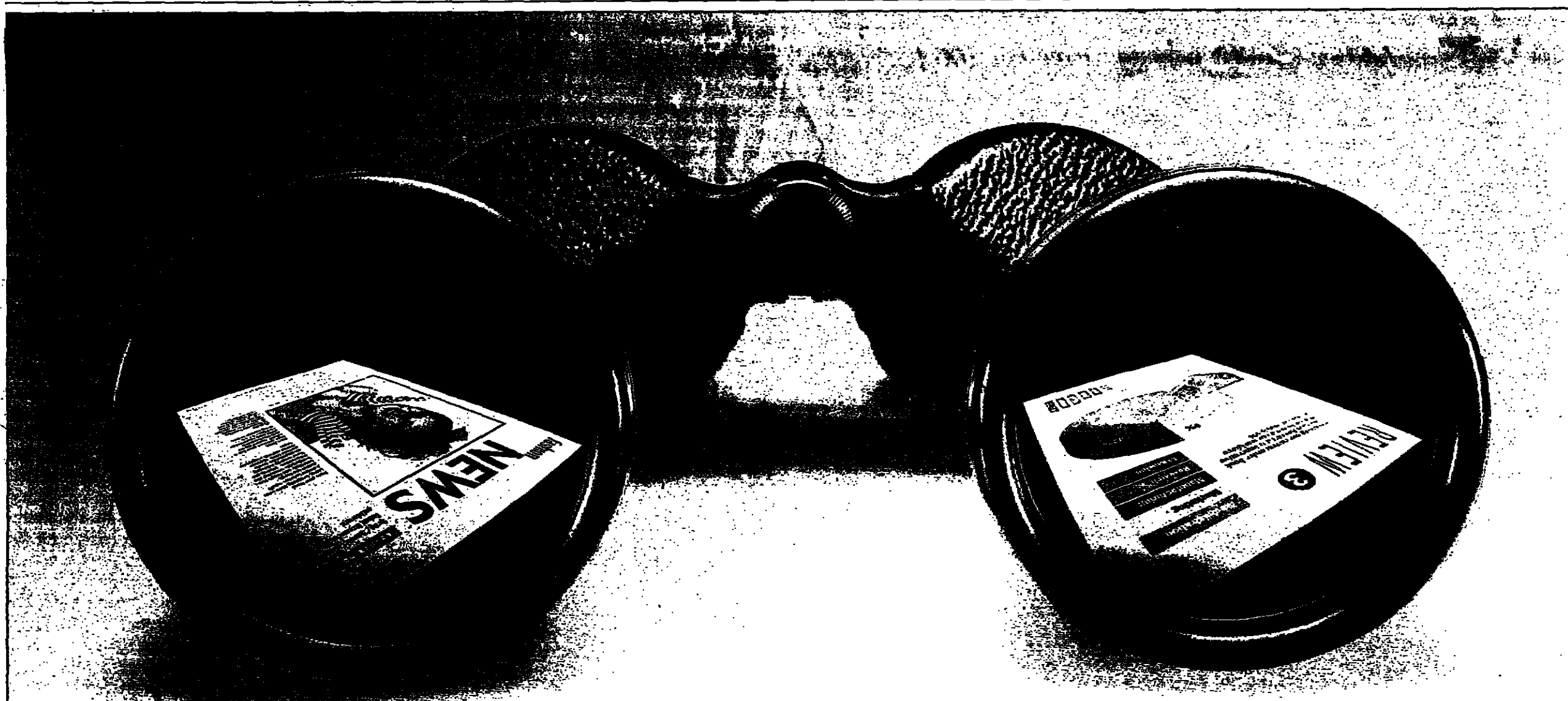
IT'S THIS EASY TO PICK UP RABIES.



A poster in Portsmouth

reason to change the status quo under which dogs, cats and some other animals entering this country must be kept in isolation for six months. "We think rabies still poses a fairly high level of risk," a ministry spokesman said. "Animals can develop the disease if they have been exposed to infection before vaccination."

Britain has been effectively free of rabies since the 1920s. The fox population is still infected with the disease in parts of Europe, though its incidence has been dramati-



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Prison staff and reformers say regime ignores Woolf recommendations and will increase tension

Howard curbs jail leave in concern for public safety

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

THOUSANDS of prisoners will lose their entitlement to temporary release from jail under tough new regulations announced yesterday by Michael Howard.

The Home Secretary is aiming to cut the number of permits for leave from 100,000 a year to 60,000. The number of prisoners allowed out last year was 29,000; in future the number eligible will be 11,000 fewer. A criminal offence of failing to return to jail after leave on licence is to be introduced next year.

In another move, a prison service helpline will open on December 5 to allow victims of crime to express a view on whether or when a prisoner should be allowed leave from jail.

Mr Howard, unveiling the curbs, said there would be no automatic right of temporary release and added that in making their assessments governors should realise that the safety of the public must be

paramount. "There are things which have been going on which shouldn't have been going on. There have been abuses. The system needs to be tightened up and that is what these proposals will do."

A more rigorous assessment of high risk prisoners will come into operation in March. Under the new regulations leave will only be permitted on



Howard: cited abuses of the leave system

specific compassionate grounds; towards the end of a sentence to help inmates to re-integrate into the community; and for education, training or work experience.

In future Category B prisoners, those for whom escape must be made difficult, will not be eligible for release for education or training.

Prisoners will be allowed temporary leave from prison through a licensing system. A facility licence will allow prisoners to take part in community service projects, employment and training courses. A resettlement licence will allow them to re-establish family ties and compassionate licence will enable them to attend funerals, visit dying relatives and keep urgent hospital appointments.

Prisoners serving a sentence of four years or more will not be eligible for any licence until they have completed half their sentences and those serving between one and four years will have to serve one third of their sentences.

Prison staff and penal reformers said the restrictions represented another retreat from the Woolf report into the 1990 Strangeways riot that recommended greater use of temporary release and would create further tension in jails.

Andrew Rutherford, chairman of the Howard League for Penal Reform, accused Mr Howard of having a "short-term view". He added: "I am afraid this is just another example of the Home Secretary shooting his mouth off without thinking."

The mother of a girl who was raped and killed by a psychopathic prisoner who absconded while on home leave welcomed the proposals. Dawn Bromiley from Morden, south London, whose 21-year-old daughter Suzanne was attacked by Keith Whitehouse in 1991, told Radio 4's *Today* programme: "The rules should be tightened, not for all prisoners, but for murderers, psychopaths and rapists."



Barlinnie prison: the special unit was set up within the jail in the 1970s to deal with particularly difficult inmates

Final curtain for Nutcracker Suite

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

BARLINNIE Special Unit, the notorious Glasgow prison for hard men nicknamed the "Nutcracker Suite", is to close after widespread condemnation of its open regime where privileged inmates were permitted to conduct sexual relationships with visitors and drink alcohol.

The unit was criticised by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons earlier this year and, following a new report into the unit, prison chiefs have now agreed that the 21-year-old unit has outlived its usefulness.

The pioneering unit, created as a prison within a prison, has accommodated small numbers of men who get a high degree of personal freedom within its walls. It is one of the most expensive prison units in Britain, costing over £70,000 a year to house an inmate compared with £26,000 a year in any other Scottish prison and £29,000 in an English jail. Sex is not condoned in the unit, but the inmates are

allowed private and largely unsupervised visits and yesterday, for the first time, the authorities admitted that sex had taken place and that prisoners and visitors had sometimes been drunk.

The report, set up by Edward Frizzell, chief executive of the Scottish Prison Service, says: "Visits have come to virtually dominate the whole of unit life. There are very few visit-free periods



Boyle: learnt to sculpt in the unit

and visitors can be found in and arriving at the unit when community and special meetings are taking place."

"Visits have long been allowed to take place, unsupervised, in prisoners' cells despite the existence of an operation instruction to the effect that staff should be present in cells when visits are taking place."

The unit will close next March and the five prisoners housed there will return to mainstream prisons in Scotland. Some have enjoyed the special privileges offered in Barlinnie Special Unit for more than five years.

"Barlinnie Special Unit no longer meets our needs," Mr Frizzell said. "It lacks both the space and the design potential which would allow personal development work or other constructive activity to be established or expanded. Some very difficult prisoners went into the BSU and thereby did not cause disruption in mainstream prisons. But there has been regime

slippage. Over the period the BSU clearly has deteriorated and the regime has fossilised. It has silted up with people there too long."

The report into the unit, where cells are decorated to prisoners' own tastes and fitted with televisions, says only one prisoner works. He is a potter who is able to sell his work.

"The remainder of the prisoners spend the majority of their time entertaining visitors, reading, watching television or sleeping." The working party found that mail for the unit's prisoners was not checked for contraband and visitors were only occasionally searched.

The unit's most famous inmate, Jimmy Boyle, was one of the first prisoners sent there. Glasgow's infamous hard man married a psychiatrist while in the unit, where he also learned to sculpt. After his release he wrote several books, and exhibited his work in a number of galleries.

Whitemoor IRA escape inquiry criticises officials

By OUR HOME CORRESPONDENT

SENIOR civil servants in the prison service have been strongly criticised in the draft report of the inquiry into the IRA escape and discovery of Semtex at Whitemoor top-security jail in Cambridgeshire. The report's bluntness has astonished Whitehall civil servants and uniformed prison staff who have been sent parts of the document in which they are named.

Among those given until next Friday to respond to criticisms of them are Philippa Drew, director of custody, Amy Edwards, area manager for London north, and Andrew Barclay, the former governor and now a member of the prison's inspectorate.

It is understood that the report has found that the IRA men made the equipment used in September's escape in the hobbies room. They had covered an observation window with a curtain which officers initially took down but then allowed to remain in place. The equipment included game posts, furniture and sheet ropes.

The Semtex is understood to have been discovered in a bag labelled "artistic material" which had been transferred in a sealed prison service bag from Parkhurst jail on the Isle of Wight.

Limited searches of cells and prisoners' property and poor supervision of visits have been highlighted as weaknesses leading to security lapses. The report criticises the decision to suspend "rub-down" searches, after IRA prisoners, transferred from Long Lartin jail, complained and ran a campaign of intimidation.

Sir John Woodcock, the former Chief Inspector of Constabulary, who is carrying out the investigation, is understood to have pointed out that there was nobody with operational experience of running a jail in the line management. Those criticised in the draft have been advised to seek legal advice or guidance from their trade union.

Warders' crowding protest unlawful

By A STAFF REPORTER

THE High Court ruled yesterday that prison officers who had refused to accept new prisoners in the overcrowded Preston jail had acted unlawfully. The judgment means a further loss of power for the Prison Officers' Association.

Mr Justice Keene said that in the highly regulated and disciplined atmosphere of a prison it was essential that a governor's lawful orders, based on Home Office criteria, prevailed over the individual discretion of his officers. Although the officers had an "understandable anxiety" that a breach of the peace might occur, he rejected their argument that they had an overriding "constabulary power" to disobey their governor's orders to continue admitting

new inmates. He said that the officers' primary duty under prison rules and under their employment contracts was to assist and support their governors and obey lawful instructions.

If they were allowed to follow their own discretion, a "state of general confusion" could arise. It was for the Home Secretary to decide on the adequacy of accommodation in particular jails.

Yesterday's judgment was part of a long-running battle between the association and the Government. A year ago the association threatened to refuse to admit certain categories of prisoner to certain jails, but the Government immediately obtained a court injunction to prevent the lock-out.

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Generals next to go after cutbacks leave the Army top heavy

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

ARMY generals believe they are next in line for redundancy after the announcement that 80 brigadiers and colonels are to be axed. The redundancies are larger than had been estimated and will leave the Army top heavy with generals.

One Ministry of Defence source said it now looked as though up to 30 per cent of the most senior Army posts could go in the cuts planned for 1990-95. Under previous estimates, appointments of two-star rank and above were to have been reduced by about 25 per cent.

At present there are two field marshals, seven four-star generals, nine lieutenant generals and 53 major generals. The axing is expected to fall next on the latter, and an MoD study is investigating how many should go.

The other services are not affected by the latest cutbacks and there are no indications that their senior posts will be further reduced. The Royal

Navy has already lost a number of its most senior officers by merging some of the flag officer appointments and the RAF insists its ratio of senior jobs to other ranks is now at the right level. The Navy has four admirals, nine vice-admirals and 27 rear admirals. The RAF has six air chief marshals, ten air marshals and 31 air vice-marshals.

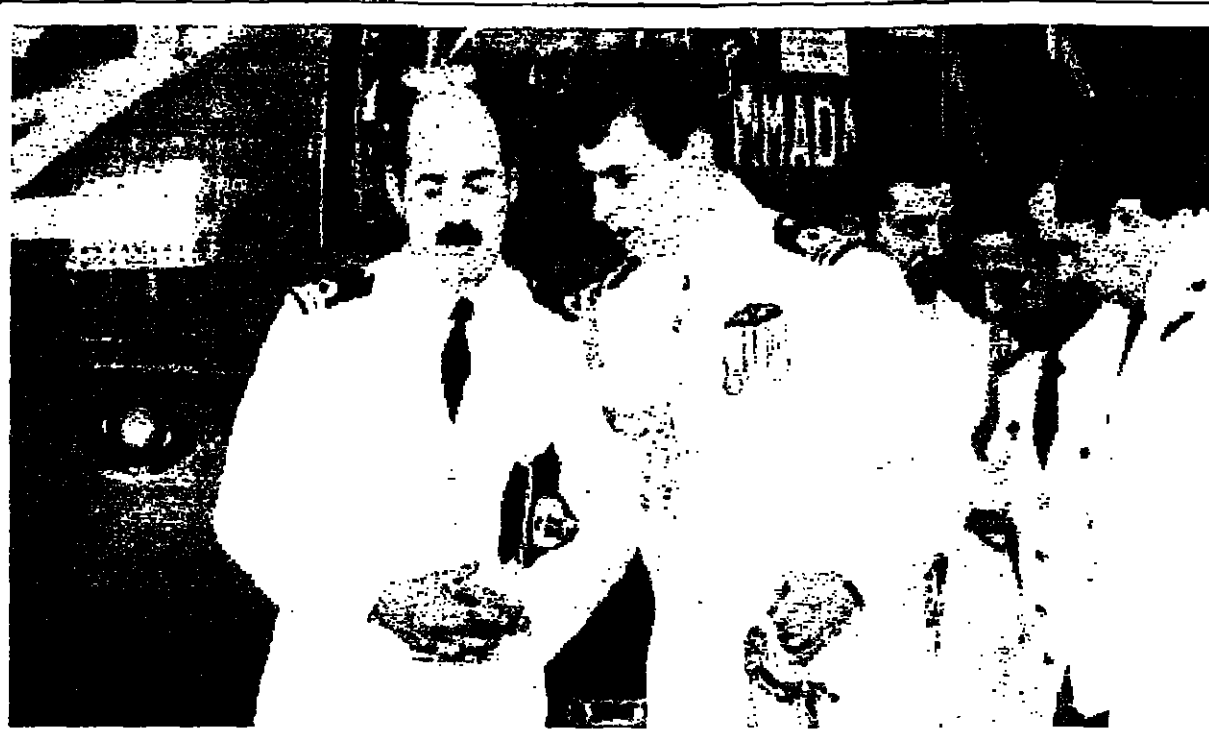
The MoD said that the cutback in brigadiers and colonels, which came under the *Frontline First* defence costs study into the support services, would involve large redundancy payments. However, a spokesman said it would have been more expensive to continue paying the officers' salaries to the retirement age of 55.

Brigadiers start on a salary of about £54,000 and colonels about £45,000. Under the redundancy package on offer, they will be entitled to up to 18 months' pay, a full pension, a special capital sum and a

terminal grant based on three times the value of the annual pension. A brigadier would expect to receive up to £200,000 plus pension and a colonel about £110,000.

Most brigadiers and colonels are staff officers and, with the Army hierarchy contracting, there will be fewer desk jobs. The cuts are not expected to affect the two dozen command appointments held by brigadiers, who will still occupy key positions such as command of the two infantry brigades in Northern Ireland and the brigades in Britain.

The axing is expected to fall mainly on the colonels, only a few of whom have command appointments. There are 453 full colonels and 192 brigadiers. Army sources said that many of the senior officers in line for redundancy would probably be happy to volunteer, especially those who realised they had only a slim chance of being promoted in the next few years.



The Duke of York with Argentinian officers at Puerto Belgrano, where the cruiser *General Belgrano* was based

Duke honours Belgrano dead

THE Duke of York paid a private tribute to the servicemen who died in the sinking of the Argentine cruiser *General Belgrano* during the Falklands war, it emerged yesterday. The scheduled gesture came as the Duke visited the cruiser's base at Puerto Belgrano, south of Buenos Aires. He deviated 50 yards from his

planned route to pay homage at a monument and saluted the memory of 323 Argentinian seamen who perished when the warship was sunk by a British submarine 12 years ago. The Duke, dressed in a white naval uniform, wearing his Falklands campaign medal and carrying a ceremonial sword, bowed his head and

observed a minute's silence. The ceremony, at the end of the official royal visit yesterday, was witnessed by only a handful of senior Argentine officers. A military policeman said the gesture had brought tears to the eyes of those present and that the Duke was "a truly royal man of the sea". The Duke is due to return to Britain tomorrow.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

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Modern values expose myth of community

Edward Norman

Down among the moralists and the social analysts there is a virtually unquestioned assumption about the benefits of community life. The social ills of the time are attributed to the break-up of traditional communities. In its report of 1985, *Path to the City*, the Church of England tied its social policy to the restoration of community. To what extent, however, is today's view of community a social myth?

When the population began to move from the countryside to the cities in the 18th and 19th centuries, it did so to escape the realities of traditional community life: the social discipline of the parish, the control of the church, the tyranny of the landlord.

Today, the living standards available in the cities have moved on to a level that is beyond the grasp of the rural population. The modern values of the city are not the same as the traditional values of the countryside.

Community life is not a myth. It is a reality. It is a fact of life. It is a part of our existence. It is a part of our identity. It is a part of our soul.

Community life is not a myth. It is a reality. It is a fact of life. It is a part of our existence. It is a part of our identity. It is a part of our soul.

Community life is not a myth. It is a reality. It is a fact of life. It is a part of our existence. It is a part of our identity. It is a part of our soul.

marriage partner, your work, or your cultural preference. Expressions of sexuality outside the approved moral code are forbidden, and the structure of patriarchy inhibits the rights of women. The socialisation of children is not a considered introduction to moral and cultural values, but is characterised by the indoctrination of conformity and the acquisition of social discipline.

Those who value human rights should take note of those parts of the world where they are least in evidence: in the developing world where traditional community life has not yet disintegrated, and in the totalitarian regimes of the developed world which have, in our own century, sought to enforce a conformity of values: fascist and communist regimes. In the

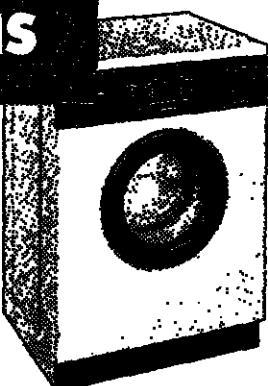
developing world, authentic communities may still be seen intact; it is also possible to observe the steady trek of the populations to the cities in order to achieve personal freedom - as in the England of the past. There are implications here for the surviving parochial structure of the Christian ministry - which assumes the utility of the community model. Modern people do not live in communities, however, but in individualised units culturally linked by the communications media. The Church, nevertheless, continues to emphasise the priority of the parish as a means of resuscitating community values.

It is possible that the time has arrived to look more radically at the shape of the Christian ministry, and simultaneously to question more fundamentally whether the wishful hope of reviving the community is really the appropriate strategy for a society whose sacred values are the consequence of its dissolution.

Edward Norman is Chaplain of Christ Church College, Canterbury.

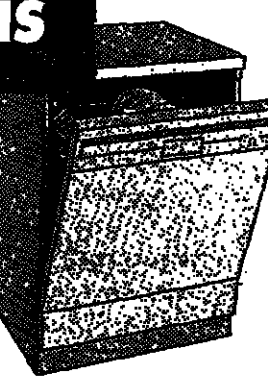
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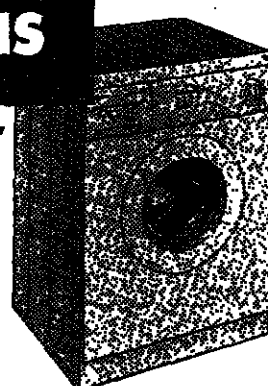
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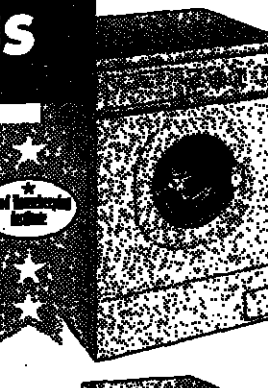
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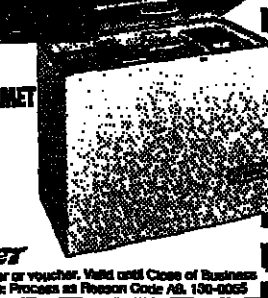
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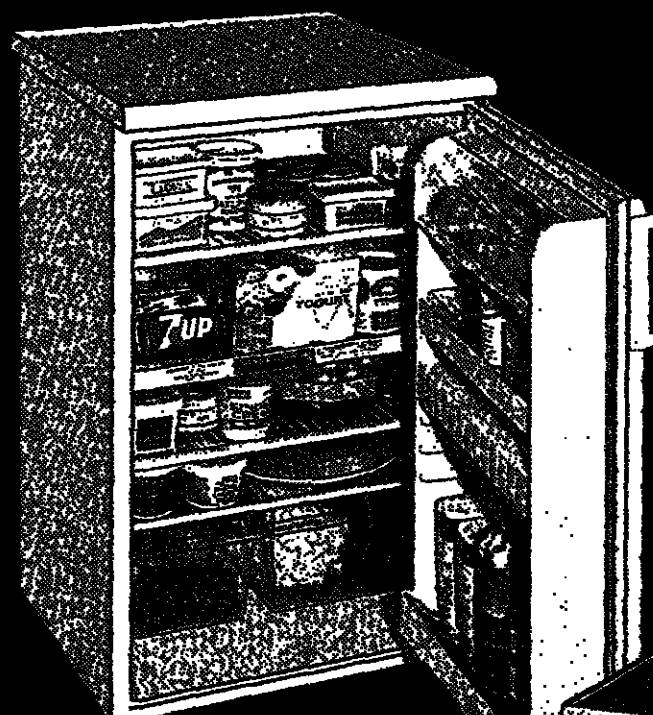
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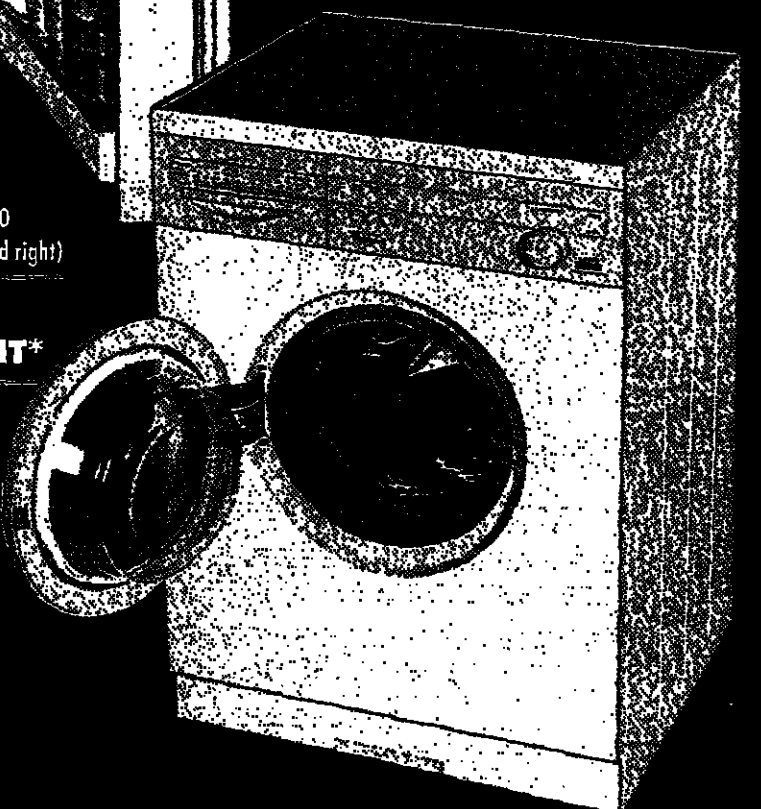
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Arafat's rule in crisis but Israeli Right applauds crackdown on Hamas supporters

Civil war threat as PLO police shoot 11 Gaza protesters

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

THE danger of all-out civil war between Palestinian supporters and opponents of the peace deal with Israel intensified yesterday after an orgy of inter-Arab violence in the newly autonomous Gaza Strip that left at least 11 people dead and up to 200 wounded.

The scenes of violence between Palestinian youths and blue-uniformed, pro-Palestine Liberation Organisation policemen armed with AK47 rifles and riot shields were reminiscent of some of the bloodiest days of the intifada between the Palestinians and Israelis, who pulled out of Gaza City in May. One right-wing Israeli politician, Rehavam Zeevi, leader of the Molodet party, said after the televised scenes of Palestinian police shooting wildly into the crowd: "The Israeli forces should learn from the Palestinian police how to deal with Arab demonstrators." A-

though Israeli soldiers were on duty only a few miles from the fighting, military sources said there had been no question of their intervening. In a first government reaction, Nissim Zivli, secretary of the ruling Labour Party, said: "The clash proves that Yasser Arafat is beginning to understand the dangers posed for the stability of the Palestinian Authority by extremists."

By nightfall the PLO had imposed the first curfew on parts of Gaza since the Israeli withdrawal. Fighting was continuing close to Gaza central prison, where some of the hundreds of arrested rioters were being held. Four police vehicles were destroyed during the violence and a senior PLO official said that one policeman had been killed and at least ten wounded.

Yesterday's street fighting was sparked when the Palestinian police surrounded the

Palestine Mosque in Gaza City, filled with at least 5,000 worshippers, after rumours that Islamic militants were planning to stage an anti-peace demonstration there which had been banned by Mr Arafat.

Streets round the Palestine Mosque and the main Shifa hospital were transformed into a battleground as the anti-PLO mobs hurled stones and bottles at the police. Some brandished knives as they charged forward. The police, many with only rudimentary training, fired first into the air and then repeatedly straight into the crowd.

As the violence erupted after noon prayers, Ahmed Baher, a leader of Hamas (the Islamic Resistance Movement) who had been preaching in the Palestine Mosque, appealed over its loudspeakers to the police: "Stop shooting your own people." Last night many



Men outside the Palestine Mosque in Gaza yesterday carry a Palestinian wounded in the fighting after Friday prayers away from further danger

Palestinians ignored the curfew and hundreds of relations of the wounded gathered outside the hospital shouting slogans against Mr Arafat, whose nom de guerre is Abu Ammar: "Abu Ammar is a traitor." In a statement, Ha-

mas, which is believed to command at least 30 per cent support among residents of the Gaza Strip, said that the Palestinian Authority had committed "ugly crimes against innocent worshippers". At least two local jour-

nalists were injured in the fighting and others were threatened. "One man held a huge rock to my head and threatened to smash it if I did not leave," said Heidi Levine, a photographer, who was then beaten by the crowd of mainly

young Palestinians who also seized her cameras. The violence posed a severe challenge to Mr Arafat, and last night he called an emergency session of his security chiefs. He has been coming under increasing pressure

from the Israelis to crack down on the militants or risk a halt in the planned moves to extend Palestinian authority from Gaza and Jericho into the occupied West Bank.

Leading article, page 21

Mahogany trade curbs defeated

BY NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

UNCONTROLLED trade in South American mahogany is to continue despite opposition from environmental groups and countries such as Britain and The Netherlands.

Members of the 120-strong Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species voted against a proposal to monitor and license the mahogany trade. The proposal, supported by Britain, was so controversial that it was subject to a secret ballot.

Conservation groups, which claimed member-states were lobbied by the timber industry, said the secret vote meant that mahogany was being traded without being held to account.

Botanists say that the mahogany which mahogany is being cut down in Brazil and Bolivia, the two big export countries, means it could be extinct in South America in 15 years' time. Dr Simon Lyster, of the World Wide Fund for Nature, said: "This is a declining species heavily exploited for international trade. It should be protected."

The biggest importers of mahogany are the United States and Britain. Tony Juniper, of Friends of the Earth, which this week

claimed that some Brazilian loggers were defying industry agreements not to trade in illegal wood, said the failure of the vote would increase pressure for a consumer boycott of mahogany products.

The failure to back a tougher trade rules on mahogany overshadowed a generally successful meeting for wildlife groups.

Scores of exotic species were given tougher protection, including the hippopotamus which has recently suffered from poaching for its teeth as they look and can be carved like elephant tusks.

Amid calls for increased spending to enforce wildlife trade bans, Britain announced it was giving £225,000 to initiatives, including one in India, to beat tiger poaching and to find alternatives to tiger parts used in Chinese medicines.

It was also agreed to carry out a study on sharks with the findings presented to the next CITES meeting in two years. There are around 350 species of shark, 100 of which are killed for fins, skin, meat, oil and cartilage. Sharks with a total weight of about 70,000 tonnes are killed each year, according to the WWF.

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Peru Indians take up arms against rebel terror

■ The army in Peru, battling the Shining Path, has found an ally in native Indians who are being killed by the rebels, writes Gabriella Gamini from Ciudad de Dios

Chivanti and his two fellow Asháninka Indians looked at the ageing American rifles with suspicion but accepted them. "The spirits of the jungle used to protect us but now an alien force has invaded and we are frightened," Chivanti said. "We accept guns to replace our bows and arrows because if we don't fight back our people will die out."

The trio had reached the Peruvian army base at Ciudad de Dios after three days of struggling through dense tropical vegetation. They were lost several times.

In broken Spanish and sometimes resorting to primitive drawings in the red earth, they described how they had escaped from the tiny village of Tisiriari after seeing 40 members of their community massacred.

"Hooded gunmen came. They burnt our bamboo huts and then began to shoot everywhere. They took the women and children and cut their heads off. Only a few of us got away," Chivanti said.

The three Asháninkas could not specify the date of the attack on their village, but it was part of a continuing

campaign by the Maoist Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) rebels, who have lost control and support in the rest of Peru. Sendero still believes in an indigenous revolution and sees Peru as the crucible for a new world order despite the fact that Abimael Guzmán, its leader, appears to have renounced such aims from his prison cell in Lima.

The last remaining Sendero faction, led by Oscar Ramírez Durán, a rival of Guzmán's, has retreated to the remote central jungle regions round the Rivers Tambo and Ene that are inhabited by the Asháninkas, Peru's largest indigenous tribe with about 30,000 members. More than 4,000 of them have been killed in Shining Path attacks since 1987, according to humanitarian organisations working in the region.

"It's more than 10 per cent of their entire population, and if the killing continues the tribe will be wiped out," said Oscar Espinosa of the Centre for Amazonian Anthropology, a Catholic organisation.

In August 1993 the dismembered and charred bodies of 64 Asháninkas, including women and babies, were found scattered around the village of Mazamari. Their traditional thatched huts were burnt and their mandioca-root plantations destroyed.

Human rights groups say several mass graves containing Asháninkas executed by Sendero when they refused to join the armed struggle have been discovered after months of search in the jungle. "Some accounts say these people were brutally buried alive," said Señor Espinosa. "The remains show signs of torture and



An Asháninka mother and her child in central Peru, where the remaining 30,000 members of their tribe faces extinction by the Shining Path

violent death, and we fear that many more graves like this will be uncovered."

The rebels are also holding more than 6,000 Asháninkas captive in their training camps, using them as agricultural labour. Accounts by Asháninkas who have escaped the camps say the rebels move

through the jungle using the captives as cannon fodder in gunbattles with the army.

"They have displaced thousands and forced them to work at gunpoint. Women and children are used to protect the terrorists from army fire. At least 70 per cent of them are suffering severe malnutrition

because they are being allowed to eat only leaves and worms," Señor Espinosa said.

The Peruvian army, which boasts that it has rescued some tribespeople from Sendero, housing them in scattered refugee camps, is unable to exert effective control or cope with the flood of displaced

Asháninkas. It has only one helicopter and relies on foot patrols to cover a vast area.

At this isolated army base, with an establishment of only 60, Alférez Renato, 25, the commanding officer, said: "Here we are fighting an endless war. Saving these indigenous people from extinction seems an impossible

struggle." It is as a last resort that he is handing out rifles to fleeing Asháninkas. "They know this wild country better, so they have a better chance," he said as Chivanti's newly formed militia group set off to seek out the rebels who murdered their relatives.

Scientists baffled by death of 20,000 penguins

FROM REUTER
IN PORT STANLEY

THE mysterious death of about 20,000 rare King penguin chicks on the South Atlantic island of South Georgia has puzzled scientists.

"This represents an ornithological disaster which will have serious implications in relation to the worldwide number of King penguins," Tony Chater, a Falkland Islands naturalist, said yesterday.

The chicks belong to the species *Aptenodytes patagonicus patagonicus*, which breeds only on South Georgia, 800 miles southeast of the Falklands, and on two other islands off Cape Horn. Mr Chater added, Gordon Liddel, formerly of the British Antarctic Survey, which monitors birdlife in the area, said he suspected the chicks had died because parents had been unable to find food.

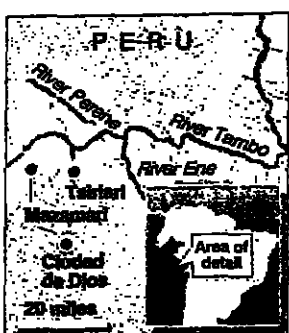
Patrick Lurcock, the South Georgia marine officer, said that unusually heavy snowfalls might have smothered the chicks. However, Martin Gibbons, an Edinburgh Zoo assistant curator, said the deaths could simply be part of a natural phenomenon. "Seabird colonies do take these sort of crashes from time to time, due to all sorts of environmental factors," he said.

The British Antarctic Survey said it was contacting South Georgian sources for more information.

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King penguin and chick species is considered rare



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Former UN chief goes home to fight 'ogre' of Lima

BY GABRIELLA GAMINI

PRESIDENT Fujimori of Peru may have thought his wife, Susana Higuchi, who branded him a "deviant, corrupt dictator", would be the biggest obstacle in his campaign to be re-elected.

But having assured Peruvians that his wife is "mad" and disqualifying her from taking part in the presidential race, he now faces a

bigger threat from an elderly former diplomat who is fast catching up in the opinion polls. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, former UN Secretary General, 74, recently returned to his native country to launch his campaign for the presidential elections due in April 1995. Opinion polls show his independent Movement for Liberty party with 30 per cent support, against President Fujimori's 41 per cent. "I am no

longer a young man, but I believe I am the only one who can force some change and return Peru to true democracy," said Señor Pérez de Cuéllar.

"Politics here is very different to what I was used to at the UN. But I am fast learning the ropes and keeping well away from the old guard political parties, often associated with cheating and corruption." The suggestion that Señor Pérez

de Cuéllar would pose a serious threat to President Fujimori's government, which has successfully curbed inflation from a staggering 7,000 per cent in 1990 to below 20 per cent and crushed the Maoist Shining Path rebels, was brushed aside at first. But the assault by the former UN chief on President Fujimori's authoritarian style and promises of policies to bridge the gap between rich and poor have hit

home. "As UN Secretary-General and a career diplomat, I was always closely tuned in to the political, social and economic situation in Peru," Señor Pérez de Cuéllar said. "He is a grandfatherly figure, who is promising to take Peru away from the grasp of an ogre," said Fernando Rospigliosi, a political analyst. In April 1992, Señor Fujimori abolished Congress and closed down judicial institutions.

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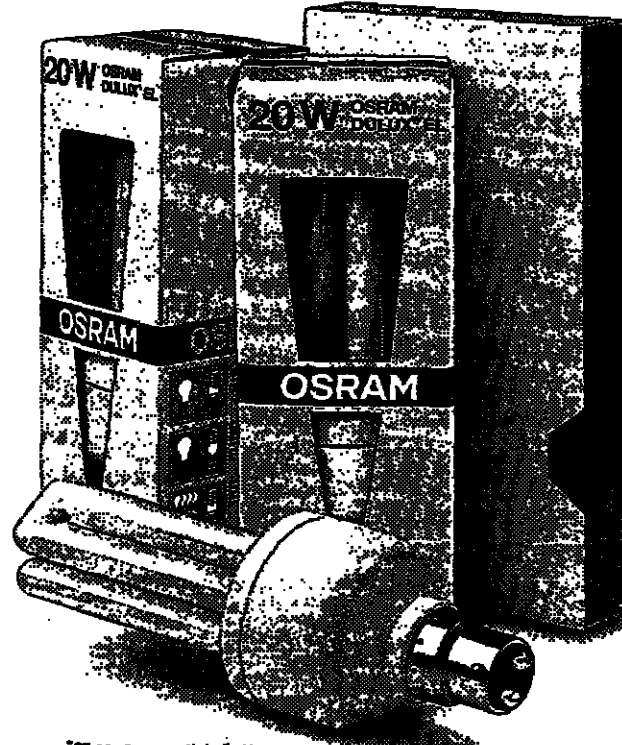
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UN observers claim Serb jets dropped napalm in 'safe area'

BY JOEL BRAND IN SARAJEVO AND MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

SERB attack jets based in neighbouring Croatia conducted an airstrike against the northwestern town of Bihać yesterday, in the second such raid on the "safe area" and violation of a Nato flight ban over Bosnia in ten days.

United Nations troops in Bihać saw the two Yugoslav-made "Eagles" fly over Bihać and launch the raid. UN military observers said an investigation of the area later indicated napalm and cluster bombs had been used.

If napalm was indeed used, it will have been for the first time in Europe. Cluster bombs have been found previously during the war, some allegedly with British markings. The former Yugoslav army is believed to have acquired British cluster bombs.

The UN observers said that the projectiles fell in the south of Bihać and that no casualties were reported. On Thursday, the UN said any further sustained attack against the UN "safe area" or against UN personnel would be met with force, including possibly Nato airpower.

Yesterday senior UN officials meeting in Zagreb did not decide on a military response, instead deferring to Boutros Boutros Ghali, the Secretary-General, and Nato. "Senior

officials here are taking this very seriously, and I understand very seriously," Paul Rieley, a UN spokesman, said. "There will be discussions with [the Secretary-General's office in New York and with Nato officials this evening."

Close to the time of the attack, Nato surveillance planes detected jets taking off from the Udina air base in Serb-held Croatia, but lost contact soon afterwards.

The triangular-shaped enclave is wedged into Bosnia's northwest corner and bordered on two sides by Serb-controlled regions of Croatia. Bihać town, the only part of the pocket protected by a UN Security Council resolution, is about seven miles from the international border. In the raid yesterday, and another on November 9, Serb planes were able to return quickly to Croatian air space.

In New York, meanwhile, an American proposal for a six-mile "weapons exclusion zone" around Bihać has run into resistance. European diplomats dispute whether Nato should come to the rescue of the predominantly Muslim Bosnian army when it started the latest fighting round the "safe area". They also said the Bangladeshi peacekeepers stationed there were inadequate

ly equipped to resist possible Serb retaliation.

Mr Boutros Ghali and Willy Claes, the new Nato Secretary-General, were also said to have recognised "the practical difficulties".

At the Anglo-French summit in Chartres yesterday, Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, agreed to urgent talks between the five-nation Contact Group on Bosnia next month. The new threat posed by yesterday's airstrikes will be top of the agenda, along with the US decision to stop enforcing the arms embargo.

Britain and France urged the Americans not to go any further towards lifting the arms embargo which would put their troops on the ground in unacceptable danger.

Since the first air raid on November 9, Serb artillery and mortar gunners round Bihać have fired a number of shells into the "safe area". Several days ago shelling near a UN post in the zone became so heavy that peacekeepers were forced to withdraw.

In Sarajevo yesterday, a sniper firing from the Serb side of the front line killed a seven-year-old boy and critically wounded his mother. The two were crossing the street in front of the Holiday Inn.



Bosnian Serb observers monitor the movement of Muslim forces yesterday near Bihać, which was attacked by Serb jets reportedly using napalm or cluster bombs

Pentagon spells out doubts on arms plan

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

COMPLYING with legal requirements, the Pentagon has presented Congress with plans for providing the Bosnian Muslims with up to \$4 billion (£2.5 billion) of weapons, training and protection if America unilaterally defies the United Nations arms embargo. At the same time it has bluntly pointed out the "serious implications" of such a move.

The plans emphasise that thousands of US ground troops would have to be deployed to help to evacuate the British, French and other allied peacekeeping forces, whose governments would order their immediate withdrawal if America breached the embargo.

They say that a big US air campaign would also be required to protect the Muslims from pre-emptive Serb attacks during training. Both the UN and Nato would be gravely undermined, and the United States would be responsible for a serious escalation of the conflict that could well spread to neighbouring countries.

The Pentagon yesterday insisted that it had drawn up the plans only because Congress required it to do so. They were not a sign that the Administration intended to breach the embargo.

Turkish elections delayed

Istanbul: Tansu Ciller, the Prime Minister, yesterday cancelled by-elections in Turkey originally set for December 4. They were suspended after a court ruling this week on the need to include Kurdish immigrants on electoral rolls in the troubled southeast (Andrew Finkel writes).

"The by-elections are cancelled. We will hold them when they become legally obligatory," she said after a meeting with her party's senior members.

Poles say sorry

Moscow: Andrzej Milczanowski, the Polish Interior Minister, on a visit here, has apologised to Russia for an incident last month in which Russian traders were allegedly beaten by the Polish police.

Door salvaged

Stockholm: The 57-tonne bow door of the car ferry Estonia, which sank in the Baltic in September killing more than 900 passengers and crew, was lifted to the surface and will be towed to Finland. (Reuters)

Writer's prize

Strasbourg: Taslima Nasreen, the Bangladeshi dissident writer whose book *Lajla* is banned in Bangladesh, has won the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize for freedom of thought. (Reuters)

Anglo-French air project is agreed

BY CHARLES BRENNER AND JILL SHERMAN IN CHARTRES

BRITAIN and France have agreed to create a joint air force group and resolved to resist any further pressure from Washington to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia and Croatia.

At a summit free from the squalls which normally dog the cross-Channel atmosphere, but overshadowed by strain with America, John Major and President Mitterrand yesterday also responded to strong French pressure by promising to study participation in the European Future Large Aircraft, a military transport plane to be built by Airbus Industrie before 2002.

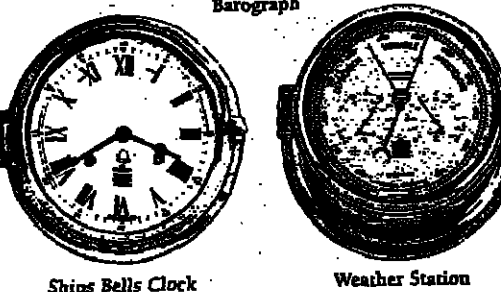
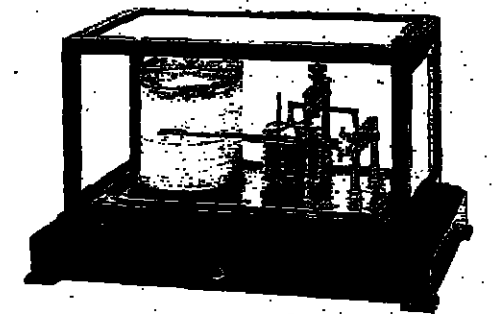
The summit was marked by "the best climate I have found in recent years" Mitterrand said. The Prime Minister agreed that it had been "extremely productive".

The agreement to create an "Anglo-French Euro-air" group is the centrepiece of a growing military partnership between the two countries in Europe. A dozen senior offi-

cers, initially under the command of a French general, will operate from a new Nato command headquarters that was set up at High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, earlier this year. The officers will co-ordinate the use of aircraft of both countries in peacekeeping, humanitarian and other operations.

The two leaders offered differing interpretations of its significance. Mitterrand said that the air force group "advances the European defence identity". Mr Major, however, played down the French-promoted scheme for an independent European defence and placed the new air group squarely within Nato. "The idea of Anglo-French solidarity in the face of tension with the Americans has been reinforced by Washington's decision to cease enforcement of the arms embargo against Bosnia and Croatia. Mr Major and Mitterrand agreed that lifting the embargo would be a disaster."

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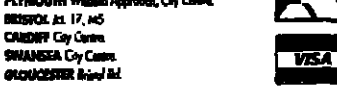
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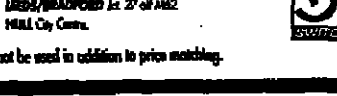
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Grachev tells MPs Russian military is near to collapse

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

GENERAL Pavel Grachev, Russia's embattled Defence Minister, yesterday issued a warning that the country's demoralised and shrinking armed forces faced collapse if they were not immediately allocated more money.

"Not a single army in the world is in such a catastrophic state: I ask you to take this as a warning," he said in a speech to the Duma, parliament's lower house. "Currently only 40 per cent of the army has modern equipment. By 2000 only 10 per cent of the troops will have modern equipment," he said, adding that by the beginning of next year the army would have only 1,917,000 men, almost a million fewer than it had two years ago.

In his speech General Grachev, a former paratrooper and Afghan War veteran, appeared successfully to skirt round the accusations of corruption against him and to fend off calls for his resigna-

tion. In particular, he highlighted the disgruntlement of junior officers who were "fleeing the army" and said that 2,600 had left the services in 1994 alone.

The Ministry of Defence had so far received only half of the £8 billion allocated to it, he said, adding that planned cuts to the budget next year would seriously threaten the military's capability. "For the sake of the country's security, think about the budget," he said. "Ask yourself — do we need an army? If so, it is a sin to keep it in poverty, half-starved."

He later struck an ominous note, saying: "We can rely on the patriotism of the military for a year or a year and a half, but how much longer?"

The debate over the fate of Russia's demoralised armed forces, rather than General Grachev's own career, appeared to provide him with some relief after the weeks of speculation about his political future. Earlier this month

General Matvei Burlakov, his hand-picked deputy, was sacked by President Yeltsin in the wake of the murder of a journalist in Moscow who had been investigating allegations of corruption in the military.

Yesterday General Grachev did have to answer some questions over allegations of his own role in the affair, but he refused to elaborate, citing the police investigation as his reason. Nevertheless, the relatively easy ride he was given by Russia's unpredictable parliamentarians does not mean he is yet off the hook.

On Thursday the Duma's defence committee recommended that General Grachev should remain in office only until January when a special commission should be set up to determine if he is fit to continue to serve. "A majority of the committee members believe the Defence Minister should resign from his post," Sergei Yushenkov, the committee's chairman, said.



A training officer counts recruits in Minsk yesterday as they start their service in the new Belorussian army. The country was forced to reorganise its armed forces as the old Soviet military structure, of which it was a part, faced demoralisation and virtual collapse

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Corrupt bases at heart of Kremlin power struggle

BY ROGER BOYES

For almost 50 years, the Soviet army prepared for war to be waged from its huge bases and bunkers, strung through the plains and marshes of eastern Germany. The war never happened, the army left; but the same bases are now at the heart of a Kremlin power struggle for control of the Russian Defence Ministry.

Among those who recently fell victim to the controversy surrounding Russian operations in Germany was General Matvei Burlakov, 59, well known in Germany for his bullish conduct of negotiations as the former Soviet army stripped its barracks and reluctantly prepared to return to the motherland. His ousting as Deputy Defence Minister followed the booby-trap murder of a Russian journalist who was investigating systematic corruption committed while General Burlakov was commander of Soviet forces in Germany.

Stories about the rackets in the Russian garrisons are tumbling out in Germany. Although every local east German prosecutor and police officer had some inkling of the huge smuggling conducted by high-ranking former Soviet officers, few were willing or able to blow the whistle. The communist East German state, of course, forbade it, and until this August when the troops finally left there was a German consensus that the Russians should be allowed to depart with some of their dignity, and their secrets, intact.

Thomas Schmidt, Potsdam customs chief, is one of several local investigators who know that Russian corruption ran deep in his country. His team confiscated more than four million cigarettes flown into a Soviet air base in eastern Germany for sale on the German market. Since the Russian bases were sovereign and were not controlled by German customs, whoever was running the swindle

could easily have cleared 25 pfennigs (10p) profit a packet. Similar stories are emerging from other German officials: together they add up to a devastating record of organised fraud.

East Germany was always a soft berth for the Soviet forces. Non-commissioned officers were able to buy cheap electrical goods and sell them for a comfortable profit back home. Middle-ranking officers and their wives used the military trading system — the special shops run by Voenburo, the Russian equivalent of Naafi — to buy cars and furnish their flats in Moscow.

But the biggest profiteers were the procurement officers, the Quartermaster-General, who could make goods disappear. As early as 1976, Alexei Myagkov, the defector who was a KGB officer monitoring Soviet forces in then East Germany, was highlighting the criminal habits of the Russian military.

Posting to Germany was seen as a licence for personal enrichment by the top brass. As most of the high command had served in Germany at one time or another, a conspiracy of silence surrounded their antics on the Warsaw Pact front line.

Certainly General Burlakov was technically supposed to approve supply contracts, and some deals were so big it is difficult to believe that the top brass did not notice. However, it may be difficult to prove that he was acting out of criminal intent, rather than ignorance or naivety, but that, as far as the power struggle in Moscow is concerned, is beside the point.

For now one of the Defence Minister's chief allies has been politically wounded, and there is enough evidence behind the high walls of the now vacant bases to injure many more.

Aland islanders to vote on joining EU

FROM NICHOLAS GEORGE IN STOCKHOLM

THE inhabitants of the Baltic Aland Islands go to the polls tomorrow to decide if they will follow neighbouring Finland and Sweden into the European Union.

The 25,000 Alanders who live on 200 of the 6,000 islands that make up the autonomous Finnish province of Aland are likely to vote "yes". Euro-supporters say bigger markets and improved terms for the Baltic ferry trade will allow the islands to maintain the style of government devised for them by the League of Nations in the 1920s. Finland was sovereign but the islands were given a large degree of autonomy and guarantees to protect their culture.

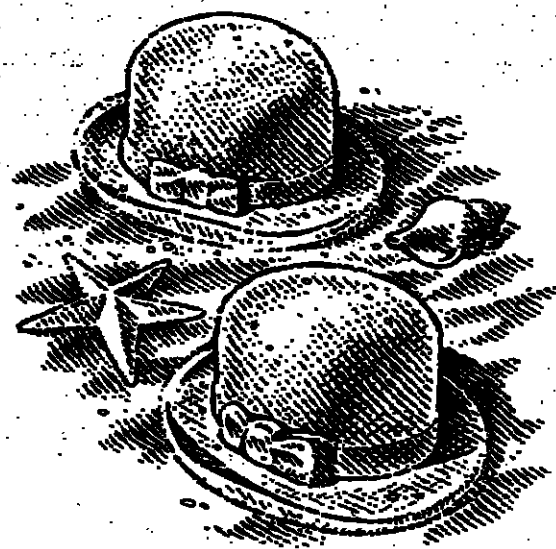
A special clause in Finland's entry agreement with the EU, the Aland Protocol, allows the islands to remain outside the tax union allowing lower rates of VAT to encourage the ferry and tourist industries. Aland lies to the northeast of Stock-

holm at the mouth of the Gulf of Bothnia. Per Ekstrom, head of Aland's trade and industry department, said he expected islanders to vote 75 per cent in favour.

Meanwhile, Finnish MPs voted yesterday in favour of joining the EU. They had the final say on referendum results which produced a "yes" vote in October.

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East Timor protesters flee to cathedral

By DAVID WATTS
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

HUNDREDS of East Timorese took shelter in the cathedral in Dili, the capital, yesterday after protesters chanting independence slogans clashed with the army and other civilians.

Riot police with shields and clubs surrounded the cathedral after protesters had taken refuge with worshippers. The stage appeared to be set for a bloody confrontation on the scale of the massacre which took place in the city's cemetery three years ago, when more than 200 mourners were shot dead by the security forces. Then Mgr Carlos Ximenes Belo, the Roman Catholic Bishop, intervened and won police agreement for the 145 protesters still sealed in the cathedral grounds to be bussed home. However, in the past the Indonesian authorities have later hunted down and arrested or killed demonstrators.

The clashes were the latest in a series of incidents which began shortly before the arrival of President Clinton in Indonesia for the recent economic summit of Asian and Pacific countries and follow mounting pressure on the Jakarta government to grant some autonomy to the territory which it annexed after its forces invaded in 1975.

Yesterday's clashes came after about 500 East Timorese gathered at the cathedral carrying banners reading "Long live East Timor". They later attacked two Indonesian men, kicking them to the ground, and clashed with about 30 more. Police intervened, firing teargas.

K.T. Arasu, a Reuters correspondent, reported that youths punched and beat the two men with sticks and chased them. One collapsed and the other was dragged away. Parishioners arriving for Mass took shelter inside the cathedral, he said. Several dozen Indonesians outside the cathedral



Young demonstrators waving the banner of Fretilin, the East Timor guerrilla group, outside the Catholic cathedral in Dili yesterday

gated the East Timorese crowd with stones. Indonesian police accused a Japanese film crew of fanning the unrest. This was a reference to an allegation, denied by the Japanese Broadcasting Corporation (NHK), that one of the television company's journalists gave protesting students banners to unfurl. Colonel Sugianto Andreas,

Dili's police chief, told about 40 foreign journalists, in East Timor to cover the protests that began last Saturday: "We have rules, don't make us use them. Foreign journalists should not do anything that can create a situation that is not peaceful. Otherwise I will be forced to use the rules." Officials on Thursday said they were conducting house-

to-house searches for those involved in the protests. Amnesty International said up to 250 may have been detained. Colonel Andreas said 131 people had been arrested, some during the demonstrations and others at their homes later, but only 22 were still being held. On the distant island of Java, 29 young East Timorese

protesters remain in occupation of the grounds of the US Embassy in Jakarta. The youths, sheltering in the embassy since last Saturday, yesterday refused an offer of asylum from Portugal, but demanded the release of Xanana Gusmão, the East Timor guerrilla leader. "We came here not for asylum but for the release of

João Alexander Gusmão," said Domingos Sarmento, a spokesman for the men who climbed over the embassy gates on Saturday. Mr Gusmão was "the only person who can represent us to deal with the Indonesian government for the independence of East Timor," Mr Sarmento told reporters standing outside the embassy's fence.

Disputed islands on agenda for China-Vietnam talks

By JAMES PRINGLE

PRESIDENT Jiang Zemin of China arrives in Ho Chi Minh City today at the start of a visit to Vietnam for meetings with leaders that will almost certainly touch on the vexed problem of the Spratly Islands.

Claimed by both countries as well as by Taiwan, Malaysia, Brunei and the Philippines, the waters around the islands are thought to be rich in

oil resources. It will be the first visit to Vietnam by a Chinese head of state since the two countries agreed to set aside their differences and normalise relations three years ago, although there have been several incidents and some tense exchanges since then.

Territorial disputes in the South China Sea, which China considers to be a Chinese lake, are considered one of the chief potential flashpoints in Asia. In 1974 the Chinese forcibly

evicted Vietnam from the Paracels, north of the Spratlys. And in 1988, three Vietnamese vessels were sunk and 76 sailors killed during a brief clash with the Chinese navy off the Spratlys, which are more than 900 miles south of the nearest point on the Chinese coast.

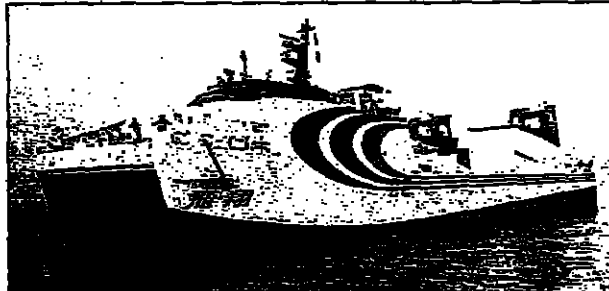
To make the matter even more complicated, both the Chinese and the Vietnamese have signed deals with different American oil companies - Crestone and Mobil - in

disputed waters that are thought to be rich in oil. Last month Hanoi accused Peking of "systematic and unacceptable" violations in the Gulf of Tonkin.

The most recent warfare between the two countries was in 1979, when the Chinese launched what they called a counter-attack into Vietnam's northern provinces to punish Hanoi for its overthrow of the Pol Pot regime in Cambodia and its occupation of China's small ally.

Now there is a cordial dislike between the two communist nations, which have traditionally been enemies since 1949.

Both Vietnam and China are remaining quiet about the precise agenda in Ho Chi Minh City, but trade, smuggling and the making of counterfeit goods in both countries will be discussed in addition to the question of oil. The leaders also plan to set up a joint commission to regulate bilateral commerce.



The Hisho enters Yokosuka port after a test run

High-speed hovering

Tokyo: Two Japanese companies have developed the world's largest high-speed hovercraft and plan to have a cargo version on the market by the turn of the century.

The new 230ft-long craft, with 16,000 horsepower gas turbine engines, could be ready for commercial use in two years, according to Mitsui Engineering and

Shipbuilding and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, the joint developers.

The hovercraft, named Hisho (Flight), was shown off this week. It has a 200-tonne capacity and can travel at speeds of up to 54 knots (about 60mph) even in rough seas - the main obstacle to hovercraft travel until now. It has a range of 500 nautical miles. (AFP)

Briton 'who ate 4lb of hashish' arrested

By OUR FOREIGN STAFF

A BRITON, who allegedly swallowed an extraordinary 4.4lb of hashish in a bid to smuggle the drug into Japan, has been arrested, Tokyo airport police said yesterday.

The Foreign Office in London confirmed the details of the report but refused to release the name of the 32-year-old suspect.

A spokesman for Narita airport said: "We couldn't believe it. We think it is a world record for this sort of thing. It is twice the amount we've seen before."

He said: "If you ate a two-kilogram steak [4.4 lb] in one

sitting, you'd know how he felt." The suspect had swallowed a total of 360 wrapped bundles of hashish, which is a marijuana byproduct, each cut to the size of a fingertip.

"It took two days for him to pass all the packages through his system after we arrested him," the spokesman said.

The man had swallowed the hashish before boarding a flight in Bangkok to Tokyo's main Narita airport on November 1. Police waited until yesterday to announce the arrest while they followed the man's drug trail.

The drugs had an estimated street value of 16 million yen (£102,000).

The spokesman said the suspect posed as a garment salesman, but Customs officers became suspicious of him as soon as he entered the arrival hall. "He was sweating profusely and rushing to the lavatory in a way that made him conspicuous," he said. An X-ray of his abdomen revealed the hashish packages, but two days later police were stunned by the number of them.

Japanese police have reported 16 such cases at Narita airport so far this year.

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'Cowardice' first, people second

Nicholas Bethell deplores the FCO's high-handed timidity

Now that Adrian and Bernadette Mooney can finally pack their belongings, ready for the journey home at the end of the month, questions are being raised about the handling of the case by British officials. The Mooneys were arrested on July 6. Should the embassy have waded in on their behalf before the harsh sentence of imprisonment was passed on them by a Romanian court more than four months later?

Should the embassy have made more of the *Midnight Express* conditions under which the Mooneys were held in prison in July? Should it have insisted at an early stage that the Mooneys, even though they broke the law, must be treated humanely? Was it, as is so often alleged, timid in its resolve to protect the interests of British citizens? The whole story puts me in mind of a brutal incident that took place at dinner in an Oxford college in the mid-1970s. The Russian dissident Andrei Amalrik, recently released, happened to be dining at high table. He was told that a former British ambassador to Moscow was sitting a few places away. Someone asked, did they know one another? No, said Amalrik, they had never met, but he would like to ask the ambassador a question: "Why did you not support me and my friends when we were in Moscow? Why did you not, for instance, invite us to your embassy?"

'Why did you not support us when we were in Moscow?'

The ambassador explained that his position as Britain's envoy accredited to the Soviet government could never allow him to socialise with, or appear to give support to, a well-known enemy of the government. He warned to this theme. Suddenly Amalrik, through his interpreter, interrupted him. "No, that is not the reason," he said. "You did not support us for two reasons. First, you are fundamentally a coward. Second, you do not understand the difference between right and wrong."

Why are so many people so beastly about the Foreign and Commonwealth Office? According to Margaret Thatcher's book, it is characterised by flexibility of principle. Enoch Powell has called it "a nest of vipers and a breeding ground for traitors". Harold Wilson called it "our Arab legion". And then there is the legendary Englishman who happens to be walking down Whitehall. A stranger asks him: "Excuse me, which side is the Foreign Office on?" He replies: "Ours, I hope."

And yet the FCO is staffed by the cream of our universities. For every one chosen, hundreds are turned away. They are our true mandarins. The Rolls-Royce from among our machines of government, fine allies if they happen to agree with you. Why are they so hated?

Resentments arise, first, because they are an elite profession. Whereas doctors and lawyers can bamboozle us with their sciences, diplomats cannot so easily brush the rest of us aside. We all have a view on foreign policy. Yet still they tell us, again and again: "We

are the FCO, the ones who know, the experts. Leave it to us. Only we can see the full picture."

Over the years the FCO has told me many times — most recently in the Mooney case — that it is "counter-productive" to complain publicly about the harsh behaviour of foreign governments in individual cases. It only irritates them and makes them worse. Geoffrey Howe wrote to me in 1985, about the treatment of Russian dissidents: "Our experience indicates that publicity is not usually helpful to personal cases."

My experience was exactly the opposite. At that time, according to Andrei Sakharov, the mere mention of a dissident's name on the BBC or other foreign-language station was sometimes enough to bring about his release, or an improvement in his prison conditions. Sakharov believed that "every violation of human rights should be made into a political problem for the violating country".

Recent history reveals a pattern whereby the Foreign Office and the FCO have given a higher priority to political expediency than to the relief of human suffering.

In June 1971, for example, a British minister, reading from an FCO text, refused to confirm that the massacre of Polish officers in Katyn woods was the work of Stalin's NKVD. "Britain has absolutely no standing in the matter," he said. The FCO maintained this "neutral" stance until April 1990, when Gorbachev admitted the Soviet Union's guilt.

In 1978, on the FCO's advice, the Queen received President Ceausescu of Romania as her guest at Buckingham Palace and awarded him the GCB. Over the next 11 years, in spite of many requests and even after the British ambassador Hugh Arbuthnot was beaten up by the Romanian secret police, the FCO refused to recommend withdrawal of the GCB. It was finally done three days before the dictator was shot on Christmas Day, 1989.

Throughout the 1950s and 1970s it was commonplace for British citizens, including diplomats, to be harassed, strip searched, arrested, physically attacked, and otherwise harassed throughout the Soviet bloc. The FCO bore these aggressive acts with great patience and in silence.

Alone among the Western embassies in Moscow, the British would never make the diplomatic bag available to its citizens. In 1990 the Moscow embassy, at the KGB's request, broke off contact with the wife of the spy Oleg Gordievsky, who was by then a British citizen. She was destitute and under KGB pressure, but it gave her no help: not even a Christmas card.

When the FCO is good, it is superb, the best in the world. But when it has got it wrong, it can appear deeply timid and unsympathetic. This is why it has incurred the odium of so many.

Nicholas Bethell's book *Spies and Other Secrets: A Memoir of the Second Cold War*, is published by Viking, price £18.

Is Verdi greater than Puccini? Do both beat Britten? John Higgins picks his team for a BBC international

Who are the eight best composers?

BBC2 will shortly be announcing its eight-man squad of the world's leading composers. No women. Despite a brief resurgence of interest in Dame Ethel Smyth in this summer's Proms there is little room for them up there in the musical pantheon. Each of the chosen eight will be the subject of a documentary for transmission in 1996. Reputations will be reassessed, with special attention given to staying power in the centuries ahead.

Six team places, we are told, are already assured. Beethoven, Mozart and Bach pick themselves. Wagner has to be there, although Rabbi Julia Neuberger was telling us the other day not to go spending our money on seeing *The Ring*. Tchaikovsky is the most accomplished all-rounder: operas and ballets to back up the orchestral works and in general a most popular chap, despite Ken Russell's attempt some years ago to drown him in sleet. But Mahler perhaps can count himself lucky to be among the Secure Six because his star has been in the ascendant only during the second half of the century. It could go on the wane again and he will have to fight to keep his place.

But there is a struggle going on among the BBC supremos, both musicians and programme controllers, over who should fill the last two places. Defenders of the national interest argue in favour of Benjamin

Britten, although those who will eventually be in charge of selling the documentaries overseas may be less enthusiastic. No one appears to have spoken up for Elgar and not even the populists so far have pushed Andrew Lloyd Webber. The selection is likely to go outside the UK.

Schubert has to be one of the top contenders. He does not turn up quite as often as he might on Classic FM, but his great virtue is a consistent place in the public affection. Light tenors may no longer warble the songs of *Liola Time*, but Schubert needs no prettification so long as the art of *Lieder* singing is passed down from generation to generation. There are plenty of hands — and voices — to take on the baton from Schwarzkopf and Fischer-Dieskau. Michael Jackson, head of BBC2, is apparently keen to have popular choices. Mahler had better watch his back.

However, the 20th-century lobby, having lost out on Britten, will be

looking for another candidate and the game is likely to fall on Stravinsky. Like Tchaikovsky, here is another good Russian all-rounder. The operas may not be all that saleable — *The Rake's Progress* could not fill Glyndebourne in the summer — but there are ballets in abundance with plenty of instantly recognisable melodies. Stravinsky can please those of even the most austere intellectual tastes and cheer the jaded classical DJ: *The Firebird* will add zip to a dreary record programme.

Then Mr Jackson, with one eye to the ratings, must be considering what could be called the "errand boy" factor. These are the composers, mainly Italian, with the ability to write songs which the whole world will whistle, fit with other words (often badly), and utilise in commercials for unworthy products. We speak of Rossini, Verdi and Puccini. Figaro's "Largo al factotum"

gave way in the popularity ratings to the Duke of Mantua's "La donna è mobile", with a little help from Caruso and Gigli. Then Calaf's "Nessun dorma" pushed them both aside with the assistance of an even bigger shove from Pavarotti. If Italian TV were doing the series then unquestionably Verdi and Puccini would be among those top eight, and possibly Rossini too. Verdi made the nation sing and stirred it with great patriotic choruses. Puccini made the world weep with his heroines, who died of consumption, exhaustion or simply by their own hand with a broken heart. The purists and the modernists will probably be against them: so too will those chasing after the latest fad for chanting monks. But even in Britain Verdi and Puccini must be pressing for their places and Verdi himself had quite a good line in chanting monks.

And so to America. Should there be a place for George Gershwin, who

rates very high indeed on the errand-boy scale? The American musical changed the face of popular music and Gershwin went on in *Porgy and Bess* to create an entirely new genre of American opera. Jerome Kern and Cole Porter will have their admirers and Leonard Bernstein, if only on the basis of two works, *Candide* and *West Side Story*, even more. But they are the movers and shakers, who, even in a populist age, are not there at the top.

Nor does Richard Strauss quite make it, although he might in Germany or Austria, where *Der Rosenkavalier* is as much part of the mythology of the literate household as *The Wind in the Willows* is here. Mr Jackson's problem is that although he is choosing on behalf of BBC2 he has to pick a world side. No national preferences, not even Britain's, should be taken into account. So, on that basis, he should put Mahler on the substitute's bench and select, in alphabetical order, the following seven: Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, Stravinsky, Tchaikovsky, Wagner. The final place goes to either Verdi or Puccini. I cannot bring myself to decide, so let it be dictated by playing conditions — in every sense of the phrase.

Then, when the musical debate is over, the final choice will probably be determined on the basis of which composers had the saddest lives.

Remember the Alamodome

Tailored to conventions and themed to death, San Antonio stands as a vulgar warning to the British

San Antonio, Texas

I have seen the future. It works, but I am not sure I like it.

San Antonio is the wonder child of America's sunbelt cities. It is booming. What makes it rich is not oil or banks or silicon chips. The new gold is "heritage". San Antonio is home of the Alamo, a shrine of American independence and custodian of the frontier spirit. But wealth does not lie in the freelance tourist. It lies in the convention business. This is corporate, compulsory tourism, the caravanserai of the deductible bill and the bored, high-spending spouse.

Next week San Antonio hopes to beat San Diego and New Orleans for the prize of hosting the 1996 Republican convention. It has spent \$17 million to win a bonanza reputedly worth \$75 million. For 20 years the city has been an ageing starlet bidding for a new role. Every part of its anatomy has been reshaped. The surgery has been drastic. It has become a doughnut with a dollop of heritage in its hole. Europe's older towns and cities should study this place. There is a lesson on every corner.

Most medium-sized American cities are monuments to the free-market policy of leaving central districts to their fate. Following the American's initial impulse to pursue every non-domestic activity in a motor car, services flee to the suburbs: homes, shops, offices, schools, parks, restaurants, even drug dealers and serial killers. The city centre becomes an Ozzymanian ruin, devoid of a reason for existing, left with the ghosts of fame long past. Among its deserted caverns, a shadowy army of the poor, the transient and the dangerous pitch camp.

San Antonio is a template for what happens next. A mistake is proclaimed. The city must be rescued or its streets will explode with ethnic violence and come out to rape the suburbs. Yet the only economic resource on which the centre can draw is the memory of its past. Since its residents no longer care, new citizens must be enticed, even if for just a few days' visit. The ghosts must be conjured back to life. History must be stitched into a new package.

The joy of the convention industry

is that its clients also come packaged. Conventioneers arrive not by car but by plane and coach. They move on foot. Such people are ideal for repopulating city streets designed for pedestrians. They can be marshalled, petted and fleeced in a controlled environment. They need only what the experts call a "themed magnet" to attract them in the first place.

The Alamo is one of America's great magnets. After it was defended by Davy Crockett in 1836, it was destroyed. What was left was carried off as souvenirs. The present decorative facade was built much later as a monument to the battle, but visitors neither know this nor care. It sits across a lawn in the city centre, crowded but unromantic. Round it giant hotels soar into the sky, Marriotts, Hyatts, Hiltons, Holiday Inns. Visitors detached from their cars need to stay close together.

Round the feet of these megaliths cluster the enhanced remains of the old city, Victorian streets and prewar commercial buildings, many of great charm. If these buildings were inconveniently located they were moved.

The historic Fairmount Hotel was rolled four blocks to a new site in 1985. Houses, barns, stables went walk-about to museums and theme parks. Air-conditioned gift-shop malls were erected. One of these, the River-

center, sits atop a diversion of the local river along a "Venice of the South" riverside. Tourists are guided in boats along its mile-long landscaped district, like characters in Disney's *It's a Small World*.

San Antonio's theme is sensational. Mexico, Spain, England, Al-sace, Italy, cowboys, oilmen, ranchers. San Antonio has themed them all. In the Menger Hotel is "an exact replica" of the "House of Lords in London". For Catholics there is "an exact replica" of the Shrine at Lourdes. Having demolished their lovely Art Deco opera house, the city fathers struck a replica of its facade onto a new office block. Restaurants offer themed catering in different sections, Mexican in this corner, French in that, English in a third. Every downtown shop seems to be in the unique crafts gift business.

Crushed up against the River Walk is the serious end of this business.



The Alamo: tourists drawn by Davy Crockett's defence of the mission find themselves in themeland

The "Alamodome", the Hemisfair Park, the Tower of the Americas, the IMAX cinema are all tributes to the gods of the superlative, the biggest, tallest, handsomest in America. Tourism is now reportedly second only to oil in American corporate turnover. The vast Gonzalez Convention Center is starting on its third expansion. San Antonio is the third most popular convention city in America (after New York and Chicago). It can deliver 5,300 convention bedspaces in its downtown walking zone. An unlimited supply of wetback Mexicans keeps labour costs low. Half the population is Hispanic.

I repeat. It works. The centre of San Antonio is bustling and prosperous. Its old buildings are back in use. The ghosts may be gaudy but they are dancing along the streets and river walks. The insensitive hotels glower down from on high, but money cascades from their balconies. Every inch looks phoney, even if it is not. But because this sort of tourism is pedestrian, it is compact and human and safe. This is the nearest I have encountered to the city as Disneyland, executed with panache.

What San Antonio has done is cram all its eggs in one basket. It is a

one-industry town. There are few residents in the centre, few schools, few food shops, services or neighbourhoods. It is near impossible to stop or park a car. In summer the visitors disappear into the air-conditioned innards that lie behind the old world facades. What happens if the convention industry suffers a relapse? The answer, I believe, is that the city collapses with it. Cities that have let their residents drift to the suburbs lack economic staying power. They lack loyalists.

Which brings us back to Thatcherism. What will be the memorial to this curious age, when privatisation, coal strikes and Falklands wars are forgotten? The answer may seem mundane, but I believe it will be the out-of-town shopping centre. Deposited by the hundred, mostly on virgin countryside, many will one day become as desolate as old airfields. They will embody a brief period when politicians believed motorists should be granted their every wish.

As a flurry of recent reports have

shown, these supermarkets have been even more lethal to the health of adjacent town centres than anticipated. Blighted high streets from Newcastle to Dudley and Worcester to Chichester have been the result. The Government has now thrown the policy into reverse and wants to ban further out-of-town shopping. Never was a stable door more hopelessly closed. The policy was as disastrous to Britain's city centres as were the comprehensive redevelopment of the 1960s and 1970s.

Out-of-town shopping is the first stage down the road which ends in San Antonio. City-centre shops are forced out of business. Residents have to use cars to buy goods and services. Offices and homes follow them into the countryside and the city is left to cheapjack shops and cafes, the elderly and the poor. Lucky cities such as York or Bath can hope to do a San Antonio. Others had better stop and think.

Thatcherism derided as socialist the use of planning regulation to encourage market forces to deliver, above all, a balanced city community. In this Thatcherism was wrong. This sort of planning was never socialist, merely sensible.

Heavy medal

THAT COMMANDING figure of an Admiral of the Fleet, picked by Baroness Thatcher of Kesteven to grace her coat of arms, has set naval whippers bristling. Close inspection with my eyeglass reveals



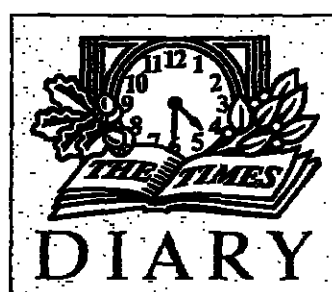
The Thatcher crest: too many gongs for naval comfort

four rows of decorations on the bearded admiral's uniform. A near impossibility, it appears.

"It is pushing it a bit," snorts Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach. "I've only got three." Ex-Garter King of Arms Sir Colin Cole, who helped Lady Thatcher design the crest, has explained that the figure — a sort of cross between Captain Birdseye and the sailor on Players cigarettes, is not meant to represent a particular person but to symbolise the Falklands victory. Sartorial experts have already spotted a slight faux pas in the choice of rollneck jumper rather than white shirt and tie. But the plethora of decorations is considered the more heinous offence by military experts.

"It is rather odd," declares a man at Spink & Son. "A contemporary Admiral might have one or two rows including three or four campaign stars or medals, an overseas award, a British order or an Order of the Bath, and that would be generous. Four rows does seem most unlikely."

In the Naval Secretary's office at Portsmouth, Commander Hugh Whittaker agrees that this is an



implausibly decorated individual. "He would have to be a very old man because he would have to have fought in both world wars," he says. "He would have to have been in the Napoleonic wars too, to be as decorated as that."

Paddle mad

MEANWHILE, SIR Denis Thatcher has one last adventure in him. As he surveyed veterans of expeditions to the world's most far-flung corners at the Scientific Exploration Society's 25th anniversary celebrations at the Sheraton Park Tower Hotel yesterday, he admitted to being somewhat travel weary. "After last year's trip with Margaret to South America I have been everywhere," He conceded,

however, that his trips have not always been full of swashbuckling excitement as he claims to have seen the inside of more factories than anyone else in the world. "I would love to go white-water rafting," sighs the baronet. "The only problem is I have to wear glasses. And I am nearly 80."

LABOUR MP Adam Ingram drew a mischievous comparison between our Prime Minister and a certain goalkeeper when addressing Scottish Nuclear's staff conference. "John Major and Bruce Grobbelaar seem to have a lot in common," Ingram quipped. "One, dropping careless ministers for allegedly taking bribes, and the other, allegedly taking bribes for dropping balls carelessly."

Drawn stumps

CURIOSLY, Durham's new captain, Mike Roseberry, has withdrawn an offer on a splendid riverside house conveniently situated for his move north. He's worried about cricket balls landing on the lawns.

At first the Sunderland-born opening batsman, who has played for Middlesex for ten years, and his wife Helen, were so keen on the

five-bedroomed house in Chester-le-Street that they instantly put down a deposit. "It seemed just what we were looking for," said Roseberry yesterday. "The River Wear runs nearby — but the grounds is too close for comfort. I don't mind being near to work, but you have to have your limits."

Musical snip

NO MUSICIAN before or since, not even Rod Stewart with his haystack, has been able to match the unkempt hairstyle of Beethoven.



Now collectors can buy that look. A lock cut from the composer's head by an old composer friend is to be sold at Sotheby's next month at between £2,000 and £3,000.

The hair will be offered with a letter from the composer's son. "My father, Dr Ferdinand Hiller, cut this hair from Beethoven's body on the day after Ludwig van Beethoven's death on the 27 March 1827 and gave it to me."

BACK to basics for our Prime Minister, I fear. In a letter to Ian Burrows from Stamford, Lincolnshire, who had protested at a scheme to incinerate waste, John Major writes of the statutory limits on material with regard to their sulphur, chlorine, polychlorinated biphenyl — "and mental content".

Royal oats

THE PRINCE OF WALES is entering the supermarket business. I hear, Waitrose, to be exact. Such has been the success of Duchy Originals, the superior biscuits made from His Royal Highness's organic oats harvested at Highgrove, that he has decided to step up production.

Certainly when they were first launched we restricted them to the

more exclusive shops," says a St James's Palace aide. "But now we have more supplies of organic oats and can satisfy a growing market." All royal biscuit profits will still go to the Prince's charities.

But small shopkeepers are not amused. "When they were launched two years ago, we were led to believe they were exclusively for specialist shops to sell," wails the proprietor of a classy north London delicatessen. "The big boys will undercut us."

French kisses

MOST of our mistletoe now comes from Normandy and conservationists want to know why. Plantlife, the wild plant conservation charity based at the Natural History Museum, has launched the first mistletoe survey for 25 years. Stocks in Britain are severely depleted, it seems, because of the loss of orchards.

"Let's hope people out in the countryside will report back on where they find mistletoe," says one romantic-minded conservationist. "After all we all want to keep this yuletide smacker British."

P.H.S



EYES TOWARDS GAZA

Israel's biggest problem is that closest to home

Palestinian police in Gaza opened fire yesterday on Palestinian demonstrators, killing 11 and wounding over 200. Martyrs will be buried today and wounds tended, and the depiction of Yasser Arafat as quelling — already current in radical Islamic circles — will acquire wider currency. The beleaguered chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation now faces his most unenviable test: how to prevent a new uprising against his own national authority, an *intifada* against the principle of peace itself.

The Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, needs to make a response too: the problems of Gaza are not Mr Arafat's alone. If the PLO loses its grip over the political processes in the areas under its control, Mr Rabin, too, will be a prominent loser. By its recent single-minded pursuit of peace with Syria, and its attendant neglect of Mr Arafat, the Israeli government has committed a strategic mistake: negotiations with Damascus should not have come at the expense of attention to the Palestinian question. While Israel's haste to strike a deal with President Assad is understandable, an enduring reconciliation with Arab states cannot be achieved without more careful management of its conflicts with the Palestinians.

Israel's peace agreement with Mr Arafat would be most unlikely to survive the loss of the 1996 elections by Mr Rabin's Labour Party. If Gaza is allowed to crumble into violent chaos, Mr Rabin will only be clearing the path for his own departure from power. The opposition Likud, which stands to profit handsomely from a disintegration of the peace accords, has made it clear that it already regards the Declaration of Principles — signed at the White House last September — as "a dead letter". Mr Rabin, therefore, must set himself two related goals: to start without delay to work towards his own re-election in 1996; and to aim for a maximum of irreversibility in the peace

process, in case his party were to lose the elections. In short, he must aim to achieve more than the Likud could possibly should it come to power.

Mr Rabin has little to lose in postponing the Golan question: a peace treaty with Syria will involve a swarm of decisions that are, in the rhetoric of Israeli politics, "painful". While Syria cannot, under any circumstances, be permitted to station troops on the Golan again, Israel may have to evacuate some — if not all — of its settlements there. Any displacement of Golan settlers will damage Mr Rabin politically. The campaign slogan visible across Israel — "The people are with the Golan" — proclaims a powerful truth. Mr Rabin must not undermine further his increasingly tenuous position by courting unpopularity with the electorate over the Golan; he should instead revert his gaze to Gaza and Jericho, and the peace process from which all subsequent good has emerged.

Elections in the Palestinian areas are already emphatically behind schedule; they cannot be delayed still further. Yesterday's shooting in Gaza — which has already acquired the status of "massacre" among the highly-charged myth-makers of Palestine — only emphasises the need for accountable administration. Mr Arafat should still win; but the longer he is regarded by his people as deriving his legitimacy from external — particularly Israeli — support, the more sharply will his support fall. The poverty in Gaza is now so overwhelming — there is cholera, and unemployment runs at 50 per cent of the workforce — that there is a case for dropping the requirement of "transparent accounting procedures" imposed on Mr Arafat by potential aid donors. From an impoverished Gaza, violent resistance to Mr Arafat and an embittered PLO, will surely come defeat for Mr Rabin in 1996. The Palestinians cannot afford that; Israel would count the cost too.

DOGGED BY FEAR

Only the madder kind of Englishman tampers with rabies laws

It is tempting to see the defenders of continued quarantine for dogs as more romantic than rational. Britain may no longer win the Eurovision song contest, it is said: our influence in the world may be not what it was; but we can still boast that our islands are a rabies-free zone. British children can frolic with foxes or scamper with squirrels without fear of the hideous death that afflicts all untreated victims of rabies.

These are not trivial benefits. Far from it. But wait, the opponents of quarantine say: nor do they die hideous rabid deaths on the Continent, where no quarantine is required of animals crossing borders. In France, the last death from rabies caught at home was in 1924.

No-one in Europe has died of rabies contracted within the EU for at least ten years. And the number of cases of rabies in animals in Europe has dropped by 70 per cent since 1986, thanks to the success of helicopter drops of food pellets containing vaccine aimed at wild animals.

A report by the agriculture select committee, to be published next Wednesday, is likely to recommend the dropping of Britain's strict quarantine laws in favour of vaccination and "pet passports". Such a move has recently been made in Norway and Sweden; and professional breeders bringing pets to Britain have been subject to similar regulations since July. The Government will doubtless note these points and promise to consider them. If it has any sense, it will then treat them as it would a bound in full form.

Britons' pride in being free of rabies is matched only by their fear of the virus breaching these islands' defences. Like the

plague, rabies touches primeval nerves. Death from the disease is not only certain once symptoms appear, but also peculiarly nasty. The accompanying terror of water — an element so necessary to life — runs against all survival instincts, and makes the illness seem diabolic. True, nobody need suffer such a fate: the illness is preventable either through human vaccines or through a course of injections after the bite has occurred. But truth is just one part of this particular story.

Until recently, widespread fear of the disease has made contemplation of the relaxing of quarantine laws almost unthinkable. So embedded was this fear in the national consciousness that it was one of the arguments marshalled against the Channel Tunnel (which, incidentally, uses fences, poison and electric grids to keep out wild animals). But a combination of changing patterns of travel, better technology and the lower incidence of rabies in Europe seems to be having an effect on public opinion.

More Britons now want to travel abroad and work abroad. Some are deterred by the enforced separation from their pets. If the animals accompany them, they have to spend six months in quarantine on their return, at a financial cost of about £1,000 and an emotional cost that is unquantifiable. Leaving pets behind is neither easy nor cheap. Nor is possible to quantify the lost revenue to Britain from foreigners who do not want to visit or work here without their pets.

But if a system of vaccines and passports were to be introduced, a flawless method of identification would be necessary. Change may eventually come — but only from a government in rash, dog-defying mood.

ARMS AND THE LADY

Honi soit qui mal y pense

The unveiling of Lady Thatcher's coat of arms this week was not her finest hour. Even the former Prime Minister's most fervent supporters would concede that the design is something of a disappointment, a little kitsch, perhaps, for such a statesman. In particular, the crusty old admiral chosen by Lady Thatcher as her supporter is a poor symbol of the Falklands conflict; and as our Diary reports opposite, the seaman sports a wildly implausible number of ribbons and campaign medals.

Anyone who has browsed through *Fairbairn's Crests of the Families of Great Britain and Ireland* can attest that heraldry is a science of great complexity which the British employ with passionate snobbery. When heraldic coats of arms first emerged in the 12th Century, they were functional rather than ornamental, a means of distinguishing friend from foe on the battlefield. On seals, they enabled the illiterate to deduce the origins of an official document. In later centuries, however, heraldry became a celebration of social hierarchy, with its own pedantic priesthood in the College of Arms.

To commission a crest for oneself is still to invite the strictures of the nation's social arbiters. Humorous designs — such as Lord Howe's sheep in wolf's clothing — usually pass the test. But those who attempt to make a serious point about their achievements face sterner criticism. In Lady Thatcher's defence, it may be said that her choice of

motif was apt and dignified. The Iron Lady might have been tempted to choose something close to "No, no, no", citing the Cannings' combative *Ne cede malis, sed contra*; or a pithy Latin version of "I fight on, I fight to win" like the *Frazers' Non extinguar*. Instead, she has made "Cherish Freedom" her motto, in honour of the positive principle at the core of her political beliefs.

Lady Thatcher's coat of arms is typical of what heraldry has become in recent years. Heraldic societies have proliferated, as coats of arms of all kinds — official and unofficial — have become more common. Banks, companies, and the simply rich are now as likely to have a crest as a great family of the shires. It may be argued that this trend has devalued the heraldic currency and the ancient chivalric ethos which it is meant to represent. But, in truth, heraldry has been associated with social climbing since its inception. Most knights cared little for the code of gentility which it represented, merely enjoying the social cachet which a coat of arms brought to its bearer.

In one sense, therefore, today's bearers of new coats-of-arms are more honest than their medieval forebears. The designs of their crests usually reflect the hard work that has earned them eminence rather than the accident of birth. This new style of heraldry may be aesthetically weak and easy to sneer at; but it is also a powerful expression of the bourgeois individualism which has become the bedrock of Western culture.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Need for research into hepatitis C

From Professor Roger Williams

Sir, Recent publicity about the likely means of infection of up to 3,000 haemophilic patients with hepatitis C (report, November 17) highlights the need for continuing research into this serious disease.

Clinical illness may not arise until after 20 to 30 years of infection — which should give some reassurance to those who have acquired the infection by whatever route. Nevertheless, the hepatitis C virus (HCV) is highly infectious; it leads to much morbidity and mortality in the world, with some estimated 300 million persons affected.

The virus is transmitted by blood-to-blood contact, mainly via transfusions and injections; but there are still many cases where doctors simply do not know how hepatitis C has been acquired.

The Times has recently drawn attention to the case of Chiron v Murex, where a biotechnology company is seeking to limit competitors carrying out research into hepatitis C by claiming that it, effectively, "owns" the virus ("Blood feud in the High Court", *Mind and Matter*, October 31). Already one HCV research project has been dropped because the Chiron patent is so broad that no resulting vaccine could ever be commercialised.

As a society we cannot afford to be restrictive about scientific knowledge in so vital a field. A vaccine which would protect, say, health workers and those exposed to intravenous infection would be an extremely important advance, and research to achieve this end should not be restricted. It is hoped that the current storm, while it may stir up undue alarm, emphasises the fact that excessively broad patents which are used to discourage commercial endeavour must be against the public interest.

Yours sincerely,
ROGER WILLIAMS (Director),
Institute of Liver Studies,
Bessemer Road, SES,
November 17.

Fruit of the grape

From Mr M. G. de St V. Atkins

Sir, I cannot agree with your leader, "Where the buck stops" (November 15), about the strength of Buckfast tonic wine. When one is tempted to drink the fruit of the grape one must decide between the cardinal virtues of temperance and fortitude. The French know only too well that spirits to be lifted must be fortified, just as the spirits that lift have been.

The monks of Buckfast Abbey are in the tradition of a great founder of monastic France, Martin, and the apostle of the Franks, Rémy.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,
M. G. DE ST V. ATKINS,
Cross House, Whittington,
Via Camforth, Lancashire,
November 16.

From Mr Brian Parker

Sir, Those who have experienced the warm hospitality of the monks of Buckfast Abbey may recall in jest that the first generous glass of their tonic wine is an experience, the second is one glass too many and the third is one glass too few.

In truth it is a most remarkable elixir whose misuse is better addressed in Lanarkshire than Devon.

Yours sincerely,
BRIAN PARKER,
Rock House,
Victoria Road, Dartmouth, Devon,
November 16.

Ouch!

From Dr Martin Ridge

Sir, Was it really a spelling mistake that led you to refer today to Jane MacQuitty as your wine correspondent [early editions only] when discussing English wines?

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN RIDGE,
41 Stoke Gabriel Road,
Galmpton, Brixham, Devon,
November 18.

Setting an example

From Mrs Pamela Hart

Sir, Teachers are being told by ministers to set an example by curbing their drinking and smoking (report, November 9). May we expect the same example from ministers on corruption and infidelity?

Yours faithfully,
PAMELA HART,
127 Parkside Drive,
Watford, Hertfordshire,
November 9.

Weekend Money letters, page 39

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 071-782 5046.

Unease over Bucks reorganisation

From Lord Carrington and others

Sir, The Local Government Commission's proposals for imposing a unitary system of local government on Buckinghamshire (report, October 27) do not command the "solid support" which the chairman of the commission has said is a prerequisite for change.

Only 19 per cent of those interviewed by MORI, which did an independent survey on behalf of the commission, supported the abolition of the county council and the creation of four unitary authorities.

Thirty-six per cent voted for either the present two-tier system or independence for Milton Keynes and two-tier in the rest of Buckinghamshire. Twenty-nine per cent didn't know — i.e. 65 per cent either wanted little or no change or didn't feel strongly enough to vote either way. Hardly a ringing endorsement of the commission's proposal.

A primary assumption when the Government set up the commission was that the creation of unitary authorities would lead to savings. In Buckinghamshire the reverse will occur and taxation will increase. The cost of change will be up to £13 million and thereafter an annual increase of some £5 million. Council tax increases will range from £36 extra on band D to £72 on band H, and all for nothing. The Government should think twice

before imposing this extra tax on the people of Buckinghamshire.

Unitary government could destroy the very fabric of the county, with its network of partnerships between the county council and the many voluntary and business organisations which have done so much to deliver excellent services. Those services could be at risk.

Last week, at the annual conference of the Association of County Councils, the chairman of the commission himself described change to unitary authorities as "a massive gamble... without a shred of evidence that they are better than two-tier local government".

Destruction is easy, rebuilding on damaged foundations is uncommonly difficult. We hope that the Government will think carefully before accepting a change which is neither in the interests of the people of Buckinghamshire nor the wish of the majority of its residents.

Yours etc,
CARRINGTON,
LEONARD FIGG,
IAN GILMOUR,
GILLIAN MISCAMPBELL,
NIGEL MOBBES,
MARGARET POPPLEWELL,
ROTHSCHILD,
32a Ottingham Square, SW3,
November 14.

Dog attacks

From the Chief Executive of the National Canine Defence League

Sir, Your report (later editions, November 15) that Jaye Coxhead, a 22-month-old baby boy, was savaged by a cross-bred Canadian timber wolf owned by his family. Surely of more relevance than the dog's genetic make-up is the question of responsible dog ownership.

Any dog, whatever breed, can, in certain circumstances, turn into a potentially lethal weapon.

The issue is not whether this attack was inflicted by a cross-bred wolf, but hinges on the responsibility of every parent of a young child to adhere to guidelines — such as those issued by the National Canine Defence League in its "canine code" — when allowing children to come into contact with any dog.

Parents must be aware of potential dangers. Dogs are not toys. You quote the child's mother as saying: "If the children hadn't been tormenting [the dog] with chocolates, I don't think he would have done it." But children should not be allowed to torment animals under any circumstances and small children should preferably be supervised when playing with large dogs.

So before hysteria sets in, and we have another piece of knee-jerk legislation introduced to rival the inadequacies of the Dangerous Dogs Act, we should all become a little more "dog-wise" when allowing children

and dogs to mix — it can so quickly become a lethal cocktail.

Yours faithfully,
CLARISSA BALDWIN,
Chief Executive,
National Canine Defence League,
1 Pratt Mews, NW1.

From Dr Bruce Fogle

Sir, Wolf-dog hybrids may have been bred most recently by the South African police but the concept is far from new (report, November 16). Dutch dog breeders introduced wolf bloodlines into the German shepherd in the 1920s to increase the dog's resistance to distemper. Virtually all of the first generation of these wolf hybrids actually died of distemper but the hybrids live on as a recognised dog breed named the Saarloos wolf-dog.

In the 1960s Czech breeders crossed German shepherds with Carpathian wolves. This hybrid is also recognised by the International Cynological Federation, as the Czech wolf-dog.

Dog breeders go through cycles of attraction to wolves. When I worked as a veterinary assistant in San Francisco in the late 1960s the wolf-dog was the hippy's natural companion. I saw none in veterinary practice again until the early 1990s. In my experience, when wolf-dog hybrids bite, they bite seriously, rather than with the inhibition bred into most domestic breeds.

Yours sincerely,
BRUCE FOGLE,
Portman Veterinary Clinic,
86 York Street, W1.

Cost of information

From Mr Richard North

Sir, The Public Health Laboratory Service doth protest too much (letter, November 14) about the costs of providing information on food-poisoning.

After all, the function of its subsidiary organisation, the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre is surveillance, i.e. the collection of data and its processing into information for distribution to those who have need of it.

In short, the very function of the Public Health Laboratory Service is the distribution of information, for which purpose it is already paid handsomely by the taxpayer, and by subscribers to its journal, the *Communicable Disease Report*.

It becomes this organisation, therefore, to levy further charges for information it should already have supplied.

Articles of peace

From Mr Stephen J. Chelada

Sir, It is deeply saddening that a leading journalist such as Simon Jenkins can make out a plausible argument for accusing the UN of "fanning the flames of war" (article, November 9; letters, November 15). Perhaps his views will prompt some people to ask why it is that the UN, which was formed expressly to avoid the "scourge of war", can be blamed for prolonging the agony of it.

Certain articles of the UN Charter — notably 51, on the right to self-defence and 39, which allows the Security Council to determine what constitutes a "threat to peace" — have been interpreted and used by the major powers in such a way as virtually to negate the UN's peace-keeping role.

Other articles — in particular 47, which aims to make the Military Staff Committee responsible for the strategic direction of the UN forces, and 26, which was intended to establish a system for the regulation of armaments — have been almost totally ignored by the same powers.

Some people may ponder why. Yours sincerely,
STEPHEN J. CHELADA
(Membership Secretary, Campaign for the Reform of the United Nations),
6 Eastfield,
Thornford, Sherborne, Dorset,
November 15.

As to the fee of £3,000 demanded by the PHLS, this relates to identifying the originators of 60 reports of salmonella food-poisoning outbreaks claimed to have been associated with eggs in 1988.

If the PHLS considers it needs that amount to trace these data, despite having assured a House of Commons select committee that all the data "had been verified", then the taxpayer needs to look very seriously at whether the PHLS is the appropriate — or most cost-effective — organisation to undertake food-poisoning surveillance.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD NORTH
(Technical Adviser,
United Kingdom Egg Producers Association),
Croft Mill,
Sharp Street, Wibsey,
Bradford, West Yorkshire,
November 14.

Sexual harassment

From Mrs Kathleen H. P. Fowler

Sir, I know little of Oxford (letters, November 12). But in my experience at Cambridge in the 1930s (where we always hunted in pairs) the men seemed more nervous of the women than the women of the men.

Yours faithfully,
KATHLEEN H. P. FOWLER,
39 Maple Road, Perth,
November 12.

Codes of conduct

From Mr Ian M. Bowie

Sir, I am surprised that William Rees-Mogg ("When is a bribe just a friendly gesture?", November 7) calls journalism one of the public professions. I always understood that a profession must have a governing body, which, *inter alia*, admits members after appropriate examinations requiring minimum standards of competence and has self-regulating powers which in extreme cases involve expulsion.

Without such an arrangement journalism is only an occupation. It may be that the way to improve present standards is to form a real profession.

Yours faithfully,
IAN M. BOWIE,
Fairfield,
16 Arthur Road, Wimbledon, SW19,
November 9.

Do the students of today know less?

From Miss Kate Allison

Sir, I am in complete agreement with Mr G. J. Caplen (letter, November 11) on the "fall in university standards" so blatantly displayed in the current series of *University Challenge*. What I would like to know is how Jeremy Paxman holds his tongue when, on *Newsnight*, he is so acerbic with anyone who, to his mind, makes a slight mistake.

Sadly, all but two of the universities (an Oxford college versus a Cambridge one was a cracking game) have so far demonstrated a singular lack of knowledge. This is not entertainment as an undergraduate myself, it makes me writhe with embarrassment for my peers.

Yours faithfully,
KATE ALLISON,
82 Ennerdale Road,
Kew Gardens, Surrey,
November 11.

From Mrs June Barton

Sir, I hope that Mr Caplen is mistaken in believing that university standards are dropping. I prefer to give myself credit for beating the contestants in *University Challenge* to the answers thanks to my now middle-aged wisdom, and of course the knowledge gained from endless rounds of Trivial Pursuit.

Yours sincerely,
J. M. BARTON,
Duddleswell House,
Duddleswell, East Sussex,
November 11.

From Mr D. P. Gray

Sir, I too have noticed that it is now far easier to answer *University Challenge* questions than in the days of Bamber Gascoigne. Moreover, if my memory serves me correctly, the teams now do not score as many points as they used to, scores of 250 or more being common in the past.

However, what really proves Mr Caplen's theory to be true was the sorry performance of the team from my old alma mater, the University of North London, who reacted like four startled rabbits caught in the headlights of an oncoming car when subjected to Jeremy Paxman's questions. Not only did I answer the questions more quickly, I answered more questions in total.

Thank goodness for *Mastermind* which, will, as always, prove my intellectual inadequacies with the start of the new series.

Yours faithfully,
D. P. GRAY,
81 Hathaway Road,
Upper Stratton, Swindon, Wiltshire,
November 11.

From Mr Patrick Warren

Sir, I suspect that the reason for the poor standards shown by the contestants in the current series of *University Challenge* is that reading as a pastime has been replaced by listening to pop music. Can anyone remember when a contestant (on this or any other quiz) failed to answer a question on this subject?

Yours sincerely,
P. WARREN,
20 Scotts Close,
Holcombe, Bath, Avon.

From Mr Philip E. Crapnell

Sir, I am not convinced that Mr Caplen is right when he assumes that the participants in the original series of *University Challenge* were more able than their successors. I took part some 30 years ago. For their over-eager response of "Ingmar Bergman" to one long-since forgotten question our opponents received a deserved five-point penalty. I then confidently buzzed and said "dinosaur". The correct answer was "Paris".

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP CRAPNELL,
Knowle, Brockley Grove,
Horton Mount, Essex.

From Mr Norman E. Hampel

Sir, I am surprised at how little the students appear to know, especially about post-war history, literature and the arts. The banality of some of the questions is disappointing, and the patronising Jeremy Paxman's snide comments are no substitute for Bamber Gascoigne's encouraging charm.

Yours sincerely,
NORMAN HAMPEL,
Two Oaks, Slade Oak Lane,
Denham, Buckinghamshire.

From Dr Hugh Price

Sir, One reaction to Mr Caplen's letter is to wonder about those not selected for the teams; in the words of Julian Barnes's stowaway woodworm: "Noah was pretty bad, but you should have seen the others."

Yours sincerely,
HUGH PRICE,
15 Castle Hill, Duffield, Derby.

Room at the inn

From Mr Robert Vincent

Sir, Children to be allowed to join their parents in a new type of pub (report, November 17)? Why, it's enough to drive one from drink.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT VINCENT,
Dilly House,
Wildern, Andover, Hampshire,
November 17.



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

November 18: The Queen, this morning visited Wycombe High School and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for Buckinghamshire (Commander the Lord Cottee) and the Chairman of Governors (Mrs Kathleen Bates).

Her Majesty toured the school, escorted by the Head Teacher (Mrs Muriel Pilkington), and unveiled a commemorative plaque to open the new Queen's Sports Complex. The Queen afterwards visited the Town Hall and was received by the Mayor of High Wycombe (Councillor Mrs Lesley Popplewell).

Her Majesty viewed various displays of projects and initiatives connected with young people. The Queen this afternoon visited Midge Networks and was received by the Chairman (Mr Robert Mudge).

Her Majesty toured the building and afterwards honoured the Chairman with her presence at luncheon.

The Queen later visited Ingrida Solutions and was received by the Chief Executive (Mr Robert Lee), who escorted Her Majesty on a tour of the building.

The Hon. Mr. Moriarty, the Rt Hon. Sir Robert Fellowes and Major James Patrick were in attendance.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

November 18: The Princess Royal, Colonel-in-Chief, Royal Logistic Corps, today visited 17 Port and Maritime Regiment at Harwood Military Port, Hythe, Southampton, Hampshire.

Her Royal Highness, Colonel-in-Chief, The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment, this evening attended the Officers' Tenth-century Dinner at the evening School of Infantry, Warrminster, Wiltshire.

Mrs Timothy Holderness-Rodman was in attendance.

KENSINGTON PALACE

November 18: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon today visited Aberdeen and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for the City of Aberdeen (Mr James Wykes).

Her Royal Highness this morning opened the new Operating Theatre Complex and Intensive Therapy Unit at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon this afternoon opened the new Centre of the Grampian Society for the Blind in John Street.

Her Royal Highness, President, Royal Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children, was present this evening at the 'Touch of Tartan' Ball held at the Beach Ballroom, Aberdeen, in aid of the Society.

Mrs Charles Vyvyan was in attendance.

November 18: The Duke of Gloucester this morning visited the Bishops' Institute, 230 Bishopsgate London EC2.

In the afternoon, His Royal Highness, Grand Prior, Order of St John, presented an Ambulance to the Faversham St John Ambulance Brigade at Kensington Palace, London, W8.

In the evening The Duke of Gloucester was present at a Dinner to mark the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the Scientific Exploration Society at the Sheraton Park Hotel, 101 Knightsbridge, London SW1.

Major Nicholas Barne was in attendance.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE

RICHMOND PARK

November 18: Princess Alexandra, accompanied by the Hon. Sir Angus Ogilvy and attended by the Lady Nicholas Ogilvy, today arrived at Heathrow Airport upon the conclusion of an official visit to Denmark.

Her Royal Highness, Colonel-in-Chief, The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment, this evening attended the Officers' Tenth-century Dinner at the evening School of Infantry, Warrminster, Wiltshire.

Mrs Timothy Holderness-Rodman was in attendance.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

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Mrs Timothy Holderness-Rodman was in attendance.

Royal engagements

TODAY: The Princess Royal, as Patron of Scottish Rugby Union, will open the redeveloped Murrayfield and attend the Scotland v South Africa international match at noon; and will attend an official dinner at Prestonfield House, Edinburgh at 7.45.

Tomorrow is the 47th anniversary of the marriage of The Queen to the Duke of Edinburgh.

Lady Davina Windsor is 17 years old today.

Christening

The infant daughter of Mr and Mrs Rory Stormonth-Darling was christened Doonee Zoë by the Rev Peter Elvy at Chelsea Old Church on Wednesday, November 16. The godparents are the Hon. Timothy Erskine-Murray, Mr Richard Pym, Lady Georgina Murray and Miss Nicola Stone.

Sir Noel Moynihan

In thanks giving for the life and work of Sir Noel Moynihan, solemn mass will be celebrated at Westminster Cathedral on Monday, November 28, at 2.00pm.

Godstowe Preparatory School

Godstowe Preparatory School is pleased to announce that 8 and 11 scholarships will be available for entry to the School in September 1995. For further details and an application form please contact the Admissions Secretary, Godstowe School, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP12 6PR. Tel: 0494 52973. Fax: 0494 42803.

Reception

The Lower Tideway branch of the River Thames Society held a reception last night at Watermen's Hall by courtesy of the Court of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen of the River Thames. Mr J. Watson Parson, branch chairman, presided.

Loretto

The Loretto Governors are pleased to announce the appointment of Mr Keith Budge in succession to the Rev Norman Drummond as Headmaster of Loretto from April 1995. Mr Budge is presently Housemaster of Cotton House, Marlborough College.



The actress Dulcie Gray, 74 tomorrow, and the chef Raymond Blanc, 45 today

Birthdays

TODAY: Mr R.S. Baldock, High Master, St Paul's School, 50; Mr Raymond Blanc, chef and restaurateur, 45; Mr J.C. Farrow, chief executive, Merseyside Development Corporation, 47.

Miss Maeve Fort, diplomatic, 54; Miss Jodie Foster, actress, 32; Miss Kathleen Halpin, former chief administrator, Regions, WVS, 91; Baroness Jeger, 79.

Admiral of the Fleet Lord Lewin, KG, 74; the Earl of Lindsey, 39; Mr David Lloyd-Jones, conductor, 60; Mr Gerald Parsons-Smith, neurologist, 83.

Air Marshal Sir Kenneth Porter, 82; Miss Meg Ryan, actress, 33; Dr Robert C. Smith, vice-chancellor, Kingston University, 59; the Ven. Michael Turner, Dean of Canterbury, 59; Professor Dame Margaret Turner-Warwick, former president, Royal College of Physicians, 70.

TOMORROW: Mr M.C. Alexander, writer, 74; Lord Archer of Sandwell, QC, 68; the Hon. Hugh Astor, 74; Mr P.G.N. Badger, chief metropolitan stipendiary magistrate, 63.

Mr Gareth Chittock, rugby player, 38; Mr Alistair Cooke, journalist and broadcaster, 82; Brigadier B.T.V. Cowey, former rugby player, 83.

Mr R.M. Francis, art historian, 47; Sir Alan Goodson, diplomat, 68; Miss Nadine Gordimer, author, 71; Miss Dulcie Gray, actress, 74; Mrs P. J. Lacey, former president, Royal College of Physicians, 70.

Mr Aubrey Jones, former MP, 83; Mr P. J. Lacey, former MP, 83; Mr P. J. Lacey, former MP, 83; Mr P. J. Lacey, former MP, 83.

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The actress Dulcie Gray, 74 tomorrow, and the chef Raymond Blanc, 45 today

Birthdays

TODAY: Mr R.S. Baldock, High Master, St Paul's School, 50; Mr Raymond Blanc, chef and restaurateur, 45; Mr J.C. Farrow, chief executive, Merseyside Development Corporation, 47.

Miss Maeve Fort, diplomatic, 54; Miss Jodie Foster, actress, 32; Miss Kathleen Halpin, former chief administrator, Regions, WVS, 91; Baroness Jeger, 79.

Admiral of the Fleet Lord Lewin, KG, 74; the Earl of Lindsey, 39; Mr David Lloyd-Jones, conductor, 60; Mr Gerald Parsons-Smith, neurologist, 83.

Air Marshal Sir Kenneth Porter, 82; Miss Meg Ryan, actress, 33; Dr Robert C. Smith, vice-chancellor, Kingston University, 59; the Ven. Michael Turner, Dean of Canterbury, 59; Professor Dame Margaret Turner-Warwick, former president, Royal College of Physicians, 70.

TOMORROW: Mr M.C. Alexander, writer, 74; Lord Archer of Sandwell, QC, 68; the Hon. Hugh Astor, 74; Mr P.G.N. Badger, chief metropolitan stipendiary magistrate, 63.

Mr Gareth Chittock, rugby player, 38; Mr Alistair Cooke, journalist and broadcaster, 82; Brigadier B.T.V. Cowey, former rugby player, 83.

Mr R.M. Francis, art historian, 47; Sir Alan Goodson, diplomat, 68; Miss Nadine Gordimer, author, 71; Miss Dulcie Gray, actress, 74; Mrs P. J. Lacey, former president, Royal College of Physicians, 70.

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 19 1994

General Electric considers increased offer after being out-bid

Bae raises the stakes in fight for VSEL

By Ross Tremain, Industrial Correspondent

THE General Electric Company last night was considering an increased offer for VSEL, the shipbuilder, after British Aerospace out-bid its £531 million takeover offer.

In a revised bid for the Barrow-in-Furness submarine specialist, BAE matched GEC's 140p-a-share cash terms. Shareholders in VSEL are also being offered improved share-swap terms of 3.3 BAE shares for every VSEL share, terms that value BAE at £560 million.

The BAE cash bid is being financed by a novel "tombstone" rights issue that will raise between £178 million and £535 million, depending on how many VSEL shareholders accept the cash alternative.

Dick Evans, BAE chief executive, said that the tombstone issue, which is underwritten by its advisers, Kleinwort Benson, would provide flexibility to counter GEC's bid tactics without forewarning the stock market.

But analysts said BAE had put itself into a win-win position because it would receive £178 million of new money even if the bid failed.

Although BAE continues to insist that its main goal is to become a prime contractor in warships, to complement its role as Britain's only warplane builder, acquisition of VSEL would strengthen BAE's balance sheet and bring in more than £200 million of cash. The new bid, with a rights issue that proceeds even if the bid fails, would satisfy the balance-sheet ambitions, even if BAE is denied its sought after expansion in naval construction.

Bae needs a stronger balance sheet so that it can make write-downs to facilitate a reorganisation or merger of its loss-making Jetstream Aircraft business in Strathclyde.

Bae, Britain's biggest defence contractor, originally launched an agreed offer for VSEL on October 12 after rejecting proposals from GEC, its main supplier of electronic systems, that they mount a combined bid. GEC, which makes no secret of its ambitions to merge its defence activities with those of BAE, launched its counter-bid on October 28.

GEC subsequently bought 14.9 per cent of VSEL in the market, the maximum stake allowed under VSEL's articles of association. BAE has since been lobbying the Ministry of Defence, the Office of Fair Trading, and MPs, warning that a takeover by GEC would diminish competition for MoD contracts. Although it

has substantial interests in naval warfare systems and weapons, BAE does not own a shipyard. However, GEC owns Yarrow Shipbuilders, Britain's main frigate builder. VSEL, at Barrow, is the only yard with recent experience of building nuclear submarines, and with facilities to build vessels up to the size of aircraft carriers. Only one other shipyard specialises in warships: Vosper Thornycroft, at Southampton, which builds vessels up to the size of a Type 23 frigate.

Mr Evans said a BAE takeover would increase competition in the supply of warships and that BAE's proven marketing expertise would improve the prospect of winning badly needed exports for Barrow. Analysts calculate that because of the ability to utilise tax losses at VSEL, it would also provide a substantial improvement in earnings for shareholders.

BAE also claims that victory by GEC would lead to unacceptable concentration of warship-building capacity, and the likely closure of the smaller Yarrow yard.

Mr Evans said: "We continue to believe that GEC's bid for VSEL creates an unnecessary monopoly in the supply of major naval systems in the UK, and should therefore be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission."

But GEC argues that combining Yarrow and Barrow offers the best chance of winning sufficient business, both at home and overseas, to keep both yards open.

Tempus, page 28



Bae says its expertise would improve the prospect of winning exports for Barrow

ICI angry over 60% electricity price rise

By George Sivell, Assistant Business Editor

ICI, one of Britain's largest manufacturers, launched a savage attack on regulation of the electricity industry, claiming that the prices it has to pay have risen by 60 per cent since the summer period which ended on October 25.

The chemicals giant reckons its electricity prices have doubled since the electricity industry was privatised in 1990 and blames the inadequacy of the pricing structure and the failure of Oftec, the electricity regulator, to ensure stable and competitive prices.

ICI says its chlor-alkali business, a large employer in Cheshire, now faces bills of more than £1 million a week just as it is trying to recover from a difficult recession. Foreign competitors enjoy lower and more stable prices.

ICI already has a power-generating joint venture with Enron on Teesside which uses gas and is the largest gas fired power station in Britain. ICI has offered to buy Fiddlers Ferry Power Station from PowerGen. PowerGen has so far been unable to provide details of the contracts which underlie the station's coal purchases and electricity sales. But ICI still hopes to acquire more generating capacity of its own.

Tony Foster, Chlor-Chemicals managing director, said: "The latest movements in electricity pool prices are intolerable. They emphasise the gross instability of the current pricing structure and fail to take account of the realities of the international marketplace we have to operate in."

"They also fail to acknowledge our bulk purchasing and our ability to adjust our production to enable us to make power at off-peak times to suit the generators. Domestic white meter customers can often purchase electricity cheaper than we can during the night."

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FT-SE 100	3131.0	(+3.5)
Yield	4.09%	
FT-SE All share	1024.22	(+1.20)
Nikkei	15302.56	(-34.01)
New York	3612.23	(-15.82)
Dow Jones	462.92	(-0.65)
S&P Composite		
US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Long Bond	9 3/4%	(9 3/4%)
Yield	8.13%	(8.14%)
LONDON MONEY		
3-month Interbank	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Libor long gilt	10 1/2%	(10 1/2%)
Libor short gilt	10 1/2%	(10 1/2%)
STERLING		
New York	1.5680*	(1.5715)
London	1.5675	(1.5775)
Frankfurt	1.5700	(2.4377)
Paris	1.5700	(2.4377)
Spain	1.5700	(2.4377)
Italy	1.5700	(2.4377)
Japan	1.5700	(2.4377)
India	1.5700	(2.4377)
DOLLAR		
London	1.5650*	(1.5650)
Frankfurt	1.5650*	(1.5650)
Paris	1.5650*	(1.5650)
Spain	1.5650*	(1.5650)
Italy	1.5650*	(1.5650)
Japan	1.5650*	(1.5650)
India	1.5650*	(1.5650)
NORTH SEA OIL		
Brent 15-day (Feb)	\$18.50	(\$16.50)
GOLD		
London close	\$384.50	(\$386.35)
* denotes midday trading price		

Intreprenuer

Grand Metropolitan has relinquished management control of Intreprenuer Estates, Britain's largest operator of public houses, as part of a complex refinancing of the 6,400-strong estate. Intreprenuer will continue to be jointly-owned by GrandMet and Courage, the UK arm of Australian brewing giant Foster's.

BP settles

British Petroleum has settled a \$1.4 billion tax dispute with the State of Alaska, where the oil company has large investments.

Growth at 4.2% tops upbeat week

By Colin NARBROUGH

HEADY year-on-year growth of 4.2 per cent in the third quarter, the strongest for almost six years, was revealed in official figures that yesterday crowned a week of upbeat economic data.

Revisions to figures for gross domestic product (GDP) increased the rise in the third quarter to 0.9 per cent, from an initial estimate of 0.7 per cent, lifting year-on-year growth from 3.6 per cent to 4.2 per cent. The second quarter was revised up to 4.1 per cent from 3.8 per cent.

The unexpectedly strong growth data, which came after this week's figures showing subdued inflation, restrained pay growth and retail spending and falling unemployment, give Kenneth Clarke, Chancellor of the Exchequer, a better base than has been available for years on which to make judgments for the Budget, on November 29.

The pace of growth in the

third quarter, when even GDP excluding oil and gas production achieved annual growth of 3.7 per cent, is, however, seen by City economists as unsustainable.

In spite of low inflation confirmed in the October figures, which appeared to ease pressure for higher interest rates, economists saw GDP strength forcing Mr Clarke to raise base rates again soon by another half point. The timing is, however, likely to depend on how his Budget is received in the financial markets. Base rates were last raised on September 12, by a half point to 5.75 per cent.

The composition of GDP growth in the third quarter is expected to give the Government cause for concern. Investment, which has not responded as much as hoped to the economic upturn, fell by 1 per cent in the third quarter, but remained 2.3 per cent above the third quarter last year.

Options net Power chief £675,000

By Philip PANGALOS

JOHN Baker, chief executive of National Power, Britain's biggest electricity generator, has exercised share options, realising an overall profit of £675,300 in the process.

Mr Baker exercised his option over 248,756 ordinary shares in the company at an option price of 20p a share. Subsequently, 230,000 shares were sold in the market at 51p.

Mr Baker, due to succeed Sir Trevor Holdsworth as chairman in April, now has a beneficial interest in 27,694 ordinary shares.

A National Power spokesman said that it is policy that the chairman be paid a flat fee, rather than bonuses and long-term incentives. News of Mr Baker's options comes a day after the company announced a 17.6 per cent drop in interim profits and a plan to buy back state-held shares.

New home loans hit by rate rise

By Robert MILLER

MORTGAGE lending by banks and building societies fell sharply in October, underlining the damage from September's interest rate rise.

Members of the British Bankers' Association reported yesterday that October mortgage lending was £572 million (£647 million in September). Last month's figure was also less than the recent £600 million monthly average.

Lending figures from the Building Societies Association (BSA), even allowing for seasonal factors, paint an even grimmer picture of the housing market. Gross lending by societies last month fell nearly £300 million, to £2.9 billion from September. Net new mortgage commitments — deals that have been approved, fell by more than £100 million in October, to £2.8 billion.

Net new commitments in October were the lowest since January's £1.8 billion and £1 billion lower than this year's

peak in March, of £3.8 billion. Peter Williams, BSA head of research and external affairs, said: "The large fall in net advances in October is disappointing. Although the downturn reflects seasonal factors, it's clear the results also reflect fragile consumer confidence, perhaps due to fears of interest rate rises after September's rise, and uncertainty in the run up to the Budget."

Figures published by the Bank of England showed M-4, the broad measure of money supply, including bank and building society deposits, fell 0.1 per cent in October from September. This in part reflects the fall in bank and building society lending according to James Capel, the broker. M4 lending fell from £3 billion in September, to £1.8 billion last month. The Bank confirmed the final M0 figure for October narrow money supply as being 0.5 per cent up on the previous month.

Lloyd's considers £1.1bn offer to names

By Sarah Bagnall, Insurance Correspondent

LOYD'S of London is considering trying to end the string of legal actions planned by more than 11,000 names on spiral syndicates by making a renewed attempt at settling out of court. A fresh offer of about £1.1 billion is being mooted.

Lloyd's ruling council is due to meet on December 7, when a new offer will be discussed. An out-of-court settlement is expected to follow in the new year.

The offer will, however, be made only to names whose losses emanate from the notorious LMX spiral, an intricate web of reinsurance contracts which led to billions of pounds of losses being concentrated on a small percentage of the Lloyd's membership.

Last February the market's entire membership of more than 22,000 names were offered £900 million. That was rejected partly because of the different interests of the spiral and long-tail action groups. At the time, David Rowland, Lloyd's chairman, said he regretted the outcome and felt particularly sorry for those not taking legal action. Yesterday a Lloyd's spokesman said: "We will consider any proposal put forward by either side."

The original offer was made before any legal actions had reached court, but earlier this year the Gooda Walker Action Group won a landmark victory in the High Court when it proved negligence on the part of the Gooda Walker managing agency and 71 members' agencies. The names are trying to recover losses of more than £629 million relating to the spiral.

The Feltrim Names Association, another spiral action group, is at present in court seeking compensation for losses of more than £530 million.

The first offer, towards which Lloyd's contributed £400 million from the central fund, founded principally because it failed to cap names' losses. That worried long-tail names whose losses arise from unquantifiable asbestosis and pollution claims in the US. The offer required names to hand over their rights to litigation without knowing the extent of their future losses.

Any successful claims will be funded out of Lloyd's agencies errors and omissions insurance cover. An estimated two-thirds of this insurance cover is reinsured outside the Lloyd's market.

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David Rowland: regrets

John Major's National Lottery thorn

Judging from the headlines, let alone my customary in-depth research, it would appear safe to assume that private enterprise, in the shape of the consortia behind Camelot, has done its bit in creating the UK's first National Lottery since 1826. Monday's launch in London, complete with a string of stars, a group of Morris dancers and John Major, heralded sales of 7 million tickets — close on three Camelot's estimates.

It was a day to play safe. Major, unaccustomed to success, expended £5 on tickets (of the lottery variety) and ushered in what he described as a "people's lottery". Could it be that the PM is considering a game of chance designed to appeal to your pet sloth? Peter Davis, Director-General of the National Lottery, took his cue and spoke of six months of "around-the-clock" work to "ensure the smooth launch of the UK's largest consumer product".

David Rigg, Camelot's communications director, did what

communications directors do, and described the event as "tremendously exciting". He spoke of a "huge operational exercise" and a "marketing project on an unprecedented scale": all delightfully understated. Catch Rigg when he is not in the presence of the PM (which gives one a window of sorts) and he reels off statistics almost as fast as Camelot dispenses £1 items of dream paper. Should one's shorthand prove rusty, the statistics arrive via the fax. They come in bullet points. Permit me to quote a few, although, with a communications director doing what communications directors do, you may already be familiar with some of them.

□ Some 10,000 retailers are on line.

□ A further 2,500 retailers will be on line by the year end. The target is close on 40,000 outlets.

□ According to market research, prior to the launch, 1 in 3 adults intend to play every week, 2 in 3 regularly, 3 in 4 occasionally.

□ The odds of winning the jackpot (the most popular statistic) are 14 million to 1. The odds of winning a prize: 54 to 1.

□ This is the largest start-up lottery system in the world and will emerge as the world's largest lottery system.

□ There are four computers: one primary, two back-ups and (just in case) one spare.

□ The network can accept 400,000 transactions per minute.

□ This represents the largest private communications network in the UK.

One that you may not know is that the "Draw Machine" has been tested by the British Standards Institute.

And, as we now know, turnover had topped up to some £35 million by 3.30pm yesterday and, come today's draw, may conceivably hit £45 million.

Not a bad achievement, bearing in mind that Camelot only received the green light from Davis on May 25. Bearing in mind that the name of the Stock Exchange



MELVYN MARCKUS

game is to discount such events, share gyrations in the City proved unremarkable. De La Rue's quote rose 15p on the week to £10.16p, while Rascal's share price reversed 17p to 23p. Cadbury Schweppes, another member of the Camelot consortium, was traded all of 1p higher on the week, at 443p. In New York, GTECH was quoted 50 cents higher, at \$20.75, during early trading on Wall Street.

British Telecom, word has it, needed a little encouragement to get its line laying act together, but, once the show was on the road, it piped like Pan.

Congratulations, therefore, to Camelot, the star performer being GTECH, the subject of a prolonged, albeit unsuccessful, dirty tricks campaign during the beauty contest.

So, at approximately 3.30pm on Tuesday, Camelot will tip a bucket load of sterling into the coffers of the National Lottery Distribution Fund: probably the thickest end of £11 million.

The spotlight, to date, has always been on Davis and Camelot. Now it will start to swing towards the beneficiaries in the shape of four Arts Councils (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) a similar number of Sports Councils, the National Lottery Charities Board, the National Heritage Memorial Fund and the mysterious Millennium Fund — best known for its thoughts on a ferris wheel.

I sense a degree of chaos.

Nicholas Hinton, former Director-General of Save the Children, was fired as chief executive of the Millennium Fund three days before he was due to take up the reins. Stephen Dorrell, National Heritage Secretary, chairs the Millennium Commission, another commissioner being Michael Heseltine, President of the Board of Trade.

Four of the five beneficiaries report to the Department of National Heritage, the exception being the National Lottery Charities Board, chaired by Mr David Sieff, which comes under the Home Office under Michael Howard.

Sieff, who was not appointed until last May, let it be known earlier this month that the NLCB is unlikely to be in a position to distribute funds until late next year. Hardly surprising in view of the fact that the NLCB has yet to appoint a chief executive. Its recent advertisement for such happened, by chance, to coincide with the Millennium Commission's advert for Hinton Mark II.

What is becoming all too evident is that there is little, if any, coordination between the five beneficiary quangos. Is information technology being shared? Apparently not. Each quango, by all accounts, is doing its own thing, calling in its own consultants.

John Major has had his moment of success. If he wishes to savour it, he might be well advised to ask the likes of Howard, Dorrell and Heseltine, a simple question. Who is responsible for coordination of the quangos?

The answer, of course, is no one. What Major should consider is the swift creation of a steering group made up of the chairmen of the distribution bodies under Dorrell or a PM appointee. The steering group, in turn, should be able to turn to the services of the equivalent of a Director-General to ensure that consistent procedures and economies are brought to bear.

If distribution fails, it will backfire on the whole concept of the National Lottery.

GrandMet to stop managing pub group

By MARTIN BARROW

GRAND Metropolitan has relinquished management control of Intreprenuer Estates (IEL), Britain's largest operator of public houses, as part of a complex refinancing of the 6,400-strong estate.

The deal, announced yesterday, appears to clear the way for the eventual flotation of Intreprenuer, possibly within three to four years, which could raise about £400 million. A management buyout may also be considered.

At the same time, Foster's, the Australian brewer, said that it had continued an overall strategic review of its UK assets. Options for the future of Courage, the UK arm of Foster's, include disposal to another brewer or joint ownership. A decision is unlikely to be taken before the year-end.

Intreprenuer will continue to be jointly owned by GrandMet and Courage, but will now be operated by its own independent management team. GrandMet and Courage will each convert £84.5 million of interest-free

loans into equity and inject £28 million of new equity capital into IEL. In addition, Intreprenuer will repay £360 million to GrandMet.

At the end of this month, the 320 Chief & Brewer pubs owned by IEL and leased to Scottish & Newcastle will be transferred to a subsidiary of Morgan Grenfell, the merchant bank, in preparation for their eventual disposal.

An initial cash consideration of £203 million will be paid for these assets. Funding for the subsidiary will be guaranteed by GrandMet and Courage. Kleinwort Benson, the merchant bank, and Jones Lang Wootton, the property surveyor, will advise on the sale.

Lord Sheppard of Digemore, GrandMet chairman, said: "We wanted to tidy up the whole activity so that in three to four years' time it could form the basis of a very interesting public company." The immediate benefit was to raise a net £332 million for GrandMet and to release management to concentrate on the core international food and drinks businesses.

Provisions have been made against one-off costs and the immediate impact on earnings in the current financial year was likely to be neutral.

Intreprenuer, established in 1991 when GrandMet and Courage merged the majority of their pub estates, has struggled in the recession, although Lord Sheppard said the venture broke even in the half-year to the end of March and was now profitable.

It has attracted fierce opposition in the pub trade amid charges that GrandMet has managed the business as a property company and neglected its pub retailing activities. GrandMet shares fell 2p to 408p.

Tempus, page 28



Lord Sheppard said Intreprenuer broke even in the half-year to the end of March and was now profitable

Hammerson in £55m French deal

HAMMERSON, the property group which sold off its Australian interests last month, is expanding in France with the purchase of a shopping centre near Paris for £55 million.

The Espace St Quentin, 20 km southwest of Paris, is being sold by Unibail, a quoted French property group, for FF459 million. The centre consists of 177 small units with a Carrefour hypermarket as the anchor tenant and Hammerson is buying it on an initial yield of 8.3 per cent.

The deal is part of a restructuring of Hammerson's portfolio launched by Ron Spence, its new chief executive. The sale of the Australian properties for £251 million in October has left Hammerson with cash to invest in France where it hopes to build up investments worth about £100 million over the next year. A spokesman said negotiations were under way over further purchases.

Uncertain market worries Perpetual

By MARTIN BARROW, CITY NEWS EDITOR

PERPETUAL, the unit trust group, said evidence is emerging that uncertainty about stock market values is beginning to affect industry sales.

The company, which has seen profits rise sharply in its latest financial year on the back of strong retail demand for unit trusts, also cautioned that greater disclosure of charges, required from January 1, could affect profit margins.

Perpetual shares yesterday fell 25p to £11.53 despite a hefty increase in the total dividend to 35p a share from 15p, with a 25p final, after a surge in taxable profits to £35.4 million in the year to the end of September from £14.69 million in the previous 12 months.

Against a difficult background, with share prices almost unchanged year-on-year after a correction that began in February, sales levels were sustained and funds under management increased to almost £3.5 billion from £2.03 billion. Earnings were

92.38p a share, up from 39.11p. Personal Equity Plans accounted for 39 per cent of sales, giving Perpetual the greatest share of the Pep market over the second half of the year. The company has some 200,000 Pep clients, adding about 1,500 new clients a week. Pep funds under management exceed £1 billion.

Martyn Arbib, chairman, said: "While Perpetual's current sales volumes remain at a satisfactory level an improvement in market conditions is probably necessary if we are to sustain the volumes attained in the year under review."

From January 1 the industry will be required to disclose the effect of charges on investment returns, and sales staff's remuneration. Mr Arbib said that with charging structures already disclosed, albeit in a different form, product providers such as Perpetual might gain advantage from the new requirements, but margins could be squeezed by the issue of charges.

Rover-free Honda sees profit soar

By COLIN NARBROUGH, WORLD TRADE CORRESPONDENT

HONDA, the Japanese car and motorcycle maker that has played an important part in the rebirth of the British motor industry, more than tripled its group profit in the first half this year, helped by the sale of its stake in Rover.

The sale of its 20 per cent of Rover to BMW, the German high-performance car maker, netted Honda ¥12.80 billion (£52.8 million), lifting group net profit to ¥38.04 billion (£246 million) at half way.

Honda was initially outraged by the way British Aerospace sold its 80 per cent of Rover to BMW when the Japanese had long-standing and intimate technological collaboration with Rover. Honda has since said that there will be no abrupt break in its technological ties with Rover.

Looking forward to a recovery in car demand, especially as Japan emerges from its economic downturn, Honda yesterday forecast that group net profits for its current financial year will be ¥60 billion, up by ¥8 billion on the prognosis given in May. Last year, the profit was ¥23.70 billion.

Honda said that its Japanese operations, whose profits rose by more than 30 per cent, to ¥14.50 billion, in the first half, owed most of the improvement to cost-cutting as home sales fell and the strong yen hit exports.

Honda put first-half savings at ¥28.50 billion, with more cost-cutting to come. Tokyo analysts expect it to cut costs by ¥42 billion during the whole of its current financial year.

Honda said that its car production in Europe would rise to 55,000 vehicles this year, 25,000 up on last year. In America, output will rise by 110,000 cars to 610,000.

Exports from Japan of car parts for overseas assembly will rise more than 30 per cent.

US trade deficit up 4.6% in September

THE Clinton Administration's drive to increase exports failed to prevent America's trade deficit widening sharply in September, putting the economy on course for the second highest full-year deficit on record. Commerce department figures, published yesterday, showed a 4.6 per cent rise in the trade deficit to \$10.13 billion, despite the weak dollar and competitive prices for US goods.

The deficit with Japan, whose trade policy continues to be a source of political friction with America, was \$5.37 billion in September. The deficit with China, another source of American concern, reached a record \$3.49 billion. In the first nine months, America ran an annualised deficit on trade in goods of \$148.8 billion, not far short of the record \$152 billion deficit chalked up in 1987.

Brazil buys frigates

THE Ministry of Defence has sold four frigates to Brazil in a £100 million package covering the Type 22 general purpose frigates Broadsword, Battlex, Brilliant and Brazen, which entered service between 1979 and 1982. The package includes three River class utility vessels. Brazil acquired six frigates from the MoD during the 1970s. Although the sale reduces opportunities for warship builders such as Yarrow Shipbuilders and Vosper Thornycroft, it provides good business in spares and support for suppliers of weapons and electronic systems.

Priddle to head IEA

THE International Energy Agency (IEA) has named Britain's Robert Priddle as its new head, replacing Germany's Helga Steeg. Mr Priddle, 56, was front runner for the job at the Paris-based institute but his appointment was held up because member countries could not decide on a head of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the IEA's parent. He was chairman of the IEA's governing board in 1991 and 1992 and is at present Deputy Secretary and Head of Consumer Affairs at the Department of Trade and Industry.

Sales boost Radstone

IMPROVED margins and a more even sales pattern helped Radstone Technology, the supplier of computer sub-systems for defence and industrial uses which came to the market in February, to a 359 per cent surge in first half profits. Pre-tax profits leapt to £1.01 million in the six months to September 30, against £221,000 last time, on turnover ahead 22 per cent to £14.5 million. Basic earnings jump to 3.98p (0.12p) a share and a maiden interim dividend of 0.825p is due to be paid on February 10. The shares were up 1p at 128p, compared with February's placing price of 125p.

Brackenbridge ahead

BRACKENBRIDGE, the bridalwear company formerly known as Cupid, returned to profit in the first half of its current financial year after a refinancing and operational restructuring, but markets remain difficult. In the half to September 30, the company made pre-tax profits of only £32,000 on sales of £5.6 million, against losses of £239,000 previously on sales of £6.1 million. Earnings were 0.14p a share, against losses of 0.29p. There is again no interim dividend. Savings are coming from consolidation of manufacturing, distribution and administration on one site.

Ibstock buys in Scotland

IBSTOCK, the building materials company, will become the main supplier of bricks in Scotland after the £14.75 million acquisition of Centurion Brick (Tarnochside) and Scottish Brick Corporation. Ibstock will pay £9.05 million in cash and assume debts of £5.5 million. There will be a further consideration of up to £200,000, depending on the value of net assets on completion. At the end of July, the combined net assets amounted to £3.73 million and the combined net profits for the preceding 12 months were £459,000. Ibstock hopes to reopen SBC's mothballed factory near Glasgow.

RTZ hopeful over Lihir

RTZ, the mining group, is confident that the Lihir gold project in Papua New Guinea could start to be developed at "some time in 1995" and that outstanding issues with the government there will be resolved shortly. Robert Wilson, chief executive, and Robert Adams, director of planning, yesterday told a meeting of the Association of Mining Analysts that RTZ, which last year opened an exploration office in Moscow, had looked at various projects in the former Soviet Union but that many hurdles had to be cleared before investment could be considered.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.19	2.02
Austria Sch	13.15	15.85
Belgium FF	85.34	48.00
Canada \$	2.249	2.089
Cyprus Cyp	0.775	0.729
Denmark Kr	10.15	9.55
Finland Mk	6.08	7.38
France F	6.47	6.17
Germany DM	2.59	2.36
Greece Dr	398.00	371.00
Hong Kong \$	11.28	10.78
Ireland P	1.07	0.98
Italy Lire	2093.00	2450.00
Japan Yen	180.00	152.00
Malta	0.615	0.590
Netherlands Gld	2.884	2.854
Norway Kr	11.27	10.47
Portugal Esc	260.00	241.50
S Africa R	162.50	152.00
Spain Ptas	210.50	182.50
Sweden Kr	12.15	11.35
Switzerland F	2.16	2.01
Turkey Lira	1.864	5810.00
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Black Arrow up to £1.1m

By PHILIP PANGALOS

BLACK Arrow Group, the furniture to leasing company, has doubled its interim dividend to 1p after a strong rise in office furniture sales helped pre-tax profits to jump to £1.13 million in the six months to September 30, against £346,000 last time. Turnover climbed to £12.8 million (£7.62 million) as sales of office furniture jumped to £12.2 million (£5.94 million).

However, Arnold Edward, chairman, is cautious on prospects in spite of the first-half advance. He said: "There was a marked improvement in activity over the corresponding period. Sales were about 75

per cent higher and operating profits showed almost a four-fold increase. While this is gratifying, I have to voice my concern at the fragility of the economy and would not like, at this stage, to predict our results for the year."

Earnings per share jumped to 2.93p (0.78p). The shares were unchanged at 43p.

The increase in sales of office furniture offset a decline leasing and instalment finance to £52,000 (£681,000). Group operating profit surged to £1.1 million (£301,000). The interim dividend is due on January 3, to shareholders registered on December 15.



Edward: staying cautious

BP settles Alaska tax dispute

BRITISH Petroleum has settled a \$1.4 billion tax dispute with the State of Alaska, where the oil company has large investments in exploration and production (Carl Mortished writes).

BP said yesterday that the settlement, which has been agreed after years of legal argument, would not affect the company's profits since adequate provisions had been

made for any claim after taking account of potential offset from federal taxes.

The settlement means that BP will pay Alaska \$1.4 billion in three instalments — \$700 million at the end of the year and two tranches of \$350 million, payable in December 1995 and 1996.

However, US analysts pointed out that BP would be able to reduce the cash drain

from the tax bill by offsetting amounts paid in windfall federal profit taxes as far back as the 1970s. One analyst forecast that the final payout to Alaska might be as little as \$700 million after deducting federal tax payments.

The dispute concerned different interpretations of how well-head prices should be accounted for in transport costs.



THE SUNDAY TIMES

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ON THE CARDS 34

The risks of
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WEEKEND
MONEY

SHINE ON GILTS 37

Are government
stocks a good
bet for investors?



How will the Budget treat savers?

Anne Ashworth and Robert Miller look at how
the Chancellor may reform tax on investments

In Barlow, Head of Tax at KPMG, the accountant believes that the Chancellor should use his Budget as an opportunity for a thorough-going reform of the taxation of savings and investments.

The aim of the changes should be twofold: to channel more of the nation's savings into industry and to raise the savings ratio. In Mr Barlow's opinion, the British should be more like the Japanese, less prone to put money into property and more willing to invest in stocks and shares.

Mr Barlow thinks Kenneth Clarke's ultimate aim should be to make income on all savings tax-free up to a limit. In the meantime, he suggests that the Chancellor should do away with Tax Exempt Special Savings Accounts (Tessas) and Personal Equity Plans (Peps).

The replacement would be a tax-free fund, a PSP (Personal Savings Plan), with an investment limit of, say, £10,000 which could be invested in either banks or building societies, or in shares.

Even those who preferred the former would, says Mr Barlow, be doing their bit for industry, as their cash could be redirected by the banks towards companies in the form of loans.

The Chancellor may be said to share some of Mr Barlow's

views. Treasury officials have already let it be understood that Mr Clarke will give at least a hint of the Government's thinking on the current review of the long-term savings and investments market and where it should be headed. But the final conclusions are unlikely to be reached until next year.

The Treasury review is one of the most thorough for many years and encompasses the whole area of consumer savings, investment and tax. Officials emphasise that no area is sacred. The tax treatment of pension funds, pension contributions, Tessas and Peps are all under the microscope.

No changes are expected in the Budget to the tax relief granted on pension contributions. However, it is part of the Treasury review. General Accident suggests that it is "not impossible" that the Government could start to restrict tax relief to the lower rate band in line with tax relief on mortgage interest, dividends and the married couples allowance. If this were to happen, says GA, it would not come into effect until the new financial year, starting next April, so that personal pension plan holders could make the most of unused reliefs from

previous years. The subject of Tessas is widely predicted to come up in the Budget as the nation - which has £21 billion or more of its wealth in these tax-free accounts - would like to know what will happen when the first ones begin to mature at the end of 1995.

Some Treasury officials believe that this money could be more usefully employed in being pumped into small and medium-sized businesses with a suitable tax incentive sweetener. The problem facing the Chancellor, however, is to come up with a suitable vehicle to channel this money into businesses. It must carry the same minimum degree of risk which Tessas offer or the appropriate spread of risk that unit and investment trust Peps afford.

There is also some suggestion that the Chancellor might care to raise the ceiling from the current Tessa limit of £9,000 to £15,000, but restrict the tax relief to the basic rate. On Peps, there is some fear that the Chancellor may move to cap an individual's total holding. But Mr Clarke may care only to tinker with the Peps provisions, perhaps ceding to industry demands to remove the exclusion of investment trust shares as a qualifying investment for single company Peps in which £3,000 can be invested.



The fruits of offshore trusts may be at risk when Kenneth Clarke presents his Budget on November 29

Time trap of pension annuities

Timing is always a critical factor in making investments and this has become particularly true when it comes to buying an annuity with a lump sum built up in a personal pension plan.

In general, annuities are very straightforward investments. You pay a capital sum to an insurance company and, in return, that company pays you a guaranteed fixed income for life. If you buy an annuity as a stand-alone investment, you can choose your moment to buy, based on prevailing interest rates. Therefore, the higher the rate, the better the life income. However, with pension-linked annuities, there is no such latitude. You have to buy at about the time you retire, regardless of where interest rates stand.

Forcing people on the verge of retirement to lock into rates that may leave them at a disadvantage in later years has put the issue at the top of this year's Budget agenda. However, the pensions industry is divided on whether or not Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, intends to do something about giving investors in pension-linked annuities a better deal. In case he does, should you wait another ten days before taking the plunge?

Some observers believe that Mr Clarke may allow investors to postpone buying a pension-linked annuity until they reach 75, rather than on retirement. Others argue that there should be no obligation to buy an annuity at all, making personal pensions into a flexible savings vehicle for retirement.

Peter Quinton, managing director of the specialist Annuity Bureau, says: "I see little indication that the Budget will bring about any major changes for annuity purchasers, and, in view of the fact that annuity rates are now falling since their peak in September, it is likely that the majority of retirees will have more to lose than gain by putting their decision on hold."

Safer annuities, page 30

Weekend Money
is edited by
Anne Ashworth

ONE popular candidate for inclusion in the Budget is a raising of the upper investment limit in Enterprise Investment Schemes (EIS). These schemes were announced in last year's Budget as a replacement for the Business Expansion Schemes and were launched to raise much needed funds for up-quoting companies.

To date they have had little impact in spite of the tax breaks, which give relief on investments up to £100,000 in each tax year. In order to give these schemes a plug, and remind everyone that they have the chance to become a business angel, the Chancellor could lift the upper limit which companies can currently raise in any one year from £1 million to £1.5 million. That would advertise the EIS as very little extra cost to the Treasury. Although EIS plans

have a low minimum investment point of £500, there have been few takers so far.

At the same time the Chancellor will be announcing final details of the proposed new Venture Capital Investment trusts which will be available from next year. These two were trailed in last year's November Budget.

The new trusts will invest almost exclusively in unquoted companies and investors will be given special tax incentives by the Inland Revenue to invest in them. The Chancellor will announce details of these tax concessions in the Budget. He is likely to devote some time to them and present the measures as a further boost to small British companies. But many investors will be need to be persuaded that these are not just very high risk ventures. That might take some doing.

RADICAL reform of capital gains tax is rumoured by some to be on the Chancellor's mind. However, accountants believe that he may prefer only to close a number of capital gains tax loopholes, with one scheme in particular as a likely target.

This particular arrangement relies for its tax saving on offshore trusts.

Believing that Kenneth Clarke intends to act, accountancy firms have been busy in the past few weeks establishing trusts overseas for rich clients with successful businesses.

Although the various steps within the intricate manoeuvre are said to be no secret to the Inland Revenue, accountants are still loath to describe the procedures involved.

Briefly explained, the scheme works like this: a UK holding company, Newco, is

formed, containing the shares of the company owned by the businessman. He has 51 per cent of the shares in Newco, with the remaining 49 per cent (the maximum possible) being owned by a complex structure of offshore trusts and offshore companies.

When the business is sold, there will be no capital gains tax liability on the 49 per cent held offshore until the beneficiary of the trusts brings the money back into Britain. Or he may prefer simply to move his residency to the tax haven and never pay the tax at all.

One accountant speculates that Mr Clarke will plug the loophole if the loss to the Revenue is becoming too great, but that if it is not substantial, the schemes may be allowed to continue. Some of those operating the schemes have sought counsel's opinion on their legality.

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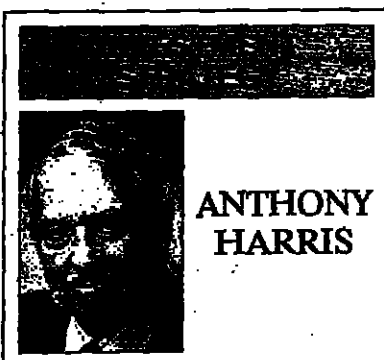
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Grandmother's footsteps

It is always a good idea for the private investor to keep an eye on what the professionals are doing. But before we come to the figures, think about their value to you. The idea is not to follow them slavishly; the managed funds do dominate the London market that they cannot, almost by definition, expect to beat the averages by more than a hair's breadth, so players of follow-my-leader might just as well buy an index-tracking unit trust and go to sleep. But just because they are so big, you cannot ignore them: they make the market weather. Investing without watching them is like planning a picnic without bothering with the weather forecast.

At the moment, as you are no doubt aware, they are behaving like one of those big, shallow depressions drifting in from the Atlantic. After the Goode report, the corporate pension funds, especially the mature funds, are having to switch out of equities, which have served them so well, and in to bonds, and they have obeyed. However, the figures collected by the WM company, which monitors the portfolios of managed funds totalling £140 billion - which means just about everyone who matters - show an unexpected pattern. The story is above all one of a retreat from Europe.

In the latest quarter, the first post-Goode period, these funds have switched about £12 billion out of equities into bonds. More than half their total holdings are in British equities, but they sold only £433 million worth. Only 8 per cent of the total was invested in Europe, but they dumped more than



ANTHONY
HARRIS

£750 million worth. They also unloaded nearly £95 million of Wall Street shares (4.8 per cent of the starting portfolio), proportionately more than double their UK sales; and a more modest £25 million of Japanese shares. But despite this general switch out of equities, thought by Goode to be unacceptably risky, they went on buying the riskiest equities of all: they put some £87 million into the emerging markets.

Now there is no need for the private investor to follow Goode; indeed, if you thought equities unduly risky, you would not be a private investor in the first place. The professional pattern is suggestive, all the same. If the managers had simply been following the old rule of cutting your losses and running your gains, and taking a long view, they would have dumped British and American shares, not European: since January they have lost 7.3 per cent on their British holdings, and 5 per cent in the US, while they lost only about 2 per cent in

Europe and made nearly 17 per cent in Tokyo. However, this timing order changed drastically at mid-year. In the latest quarter, Europe ran out of steam, while London and Wall Street returned to modest profit, and the emerging markets came roaring back from their first-half dumps with a quarterly return of nearly 10 per cent. You can draw two conclusions, and they are probably both right. First, the professionals seem to work with a very short-time horizon; but they also seem to believe that the recent pattern is a better guide to the future than the figures for the year as a whole.

This makes good sense if you believe, as I do, in the monetarist explanation of market movements: that asset prices rise most strongly in a recession, because they are driven up by idle money, but tend to relapse with recovery, as industry requires funds for expansion. This explains the doldrums in London and New York, reflecting well-established recoveries, and warns of coming stagnation in Europe.

It also justifies faith in the emerging markets, where huge inflows of foreign capital swamp any local monetary effects; these should continue to reflect dynamic real growth, the highest risk, admittedly, but the highest potential long-term profit. You should not follow the professionals here, but try to get ahead of them. They still have only 1.6 per cent of their total investments in the emerging markets. Any private investor who does not need to keep his whole portfolio liquid should aim much higher - perhaps ten times as high as the fund managers.

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Funds of funds fail to sparkle

One little noticed trend in the explosive growth of the unit trust sector since 1992 has been the rush of money into funds of funds. Over the last year alone, the amount under management has nearly doubled to £2.9 billion. But for many hopeful investors, who believed that funds of funds held the promise of assured capital growth without undue risk, these trusts have proved a disappointment.

In theory, funds of funds sound like a good idea, especially for first-time investors. They invest in a spread of other unit trusts, generally other funds offered by the same company. So instead of having to choose from a whole range of specialist unit trusts investing in different types of companies or different parts of the world, you can hand over the decision making to a professional fund manager to put together the best combination of funds for you and switch to different funds when necessary.

But there are several potential disadvantages. The performance of the fund can be only as good as the sum of its parts. However good the fund manager may be at getting the right mix of trusts, if they do not perform well neither will the fund of funds. This has been the main problem for Lloyds Bank's Mastertrust, Raymond Haines, its investment chief, admits. "The long-term performance of Mastertrust has been poor because many of its constituent funds were not performing well, but we have been working on improving performance, and this is beginning to show through in Mastertrust," he says.

A fund of funds may also have to work harder to make up for an extra layer of charges. Fidelity's Money Builder, for example, imposes an extra 0.5 per cent per annum on top of the underlying unit trust charges, which means you may be paying management charges of up to 2 per cent per annum on some parts of the fund. Funds of funds run by financial intermediaries can levy annual charges of up to 2.75 per cent per annum. There is also a

potential conflict of interest. When the fund of funds manager wants to switch out of one of the underlying trusts, he may be inhibited from doing so knowing the impact that this self-off could have on that trust, particularly if he is a large investor in it. However, companies deny this is a problem or that funds can become "dustbin" funds, taking up positions in funds that are shrinking as other investors dispose of their units.

Two of the biggest funds of funds are run by the TSB. Its Selector and Selector Income trusts together are valued at more than £700 million. So they account for about a third of the money invested in TSB's other trusts. Their performance has been less than impressive. Both show below average performance in the fund of funds sector over one and three years to November 1. Selector Income ranks 55th out of 58 funds over the past year, showing a loss of 10 per cent, while Selector is down 7 per cent.

Until the beginning of this month, both funds were being heavily promoted by the TSB as the investment links for its personal equity plan, Frank Wilson, of TSB, said: "Offering funds of funds prevented our branch advisers from having to make investment recommendations."

However, at the beginning of November, the TSB suddenly changed its tune and introduced three new unit trusts as links for its re-vamped Pep - UK Growth, UK Income and Worldwide Growth. They are not funds of funds. However, existing investors in the Selector funds will have to stay put unless they are prepared to pay a 2 per cent charge to move to another fund.

Not all funds of funds have produced poor results. According to Unit Trust Analysis, which monitors the consistency of trust performance, a fund such as Britannia Life's Managed Portfolio Fund has achieved repeatedly good results because of its flexible approach. Another consistent performer has been the Portfolio Fund of Funds.



Bernie Cornfeld, who first promoted funds of funds, with Victoria Principal

THE FUND of funds concept was first promoted in the early 1960s by Bernie Cornfeld. "Do you sincerely want to be rich?" Cornfeld, one-time escort of Victoria Principal, the Dallas star. But they were offshore funds rather than unit trusts sold through IOS, his company. Investors were massively overcharged, paying heavy initial charges on both the funds of funds and then again on the underlying funds. The operation came unstuck after the funds of funds became overexposed to the IOS Natural Resources Fund, which had purchased 27 million acres of north west Canada for oil exploration that turned out to be heavily overvalued. The whole operation collapsed in the mid-1960s, amid litigation and reclamation.

Subsequently, authorised unit trust funds of funds were not permitted until the mid-1980s. After much lobbying by the unit trust industry,

the Department of Trade and Industry agreed to their introduction in 1985. It stipulated that each fund should contain a minimum of no more than five unit trusts and that no single holding should amount to more than 20 per cent of the fund. Two of the first companies to introduce them were Abbey Life and Save & Prosper. The fund of funds sector now constitutes more than 3 per cent of the industry's total funds. Most restrict themselves to investing in other trusts within the parent company group.

A growing trend in the 1990s, though, has been the introduction of broker funds of funds. These trusts are managed by independent intermediary firms with administration provided by established unit trust companies, such as Gartmore and Providence Capital. They include trusts from various management groups in their funds of funds.

HOW THE FUNDS OF FUNDS HAVE FARED

Current value of £100 invested three years ago			
Top performers	£	Bottom performers	
Portfolio Fund of Funds	164	TSB Selector	122
Fidelity Moneybuilder	151	TSB Selector Income	121
Britannia LI Managed Ptl	151	PC Premier Performers	119
GAM Amalgam	145	City Fund F'mount Inc & Growth	112
PCS IPS Portfolio Trust	144	Kleinwort Benson Master Trust	111
PC International Growth	143	PC St James Mgd Income	96

Source: Mirocor. Offer to bid with net income reinvested, figures to November 14, 1994

Annuity buying made safer

Not all-biting decisions about when to buy annuities will become a little less stressful from January when new regulations allow anyone buying a pension annuity 14 days' grace to reflect on the wisdom of their choice.

At the moment, annuity buyers have to make an instant, irreversible decision and are then stuck with the consequences for the rest of their lives. The Securities and Investments Board has decided that this sudden-death approach to pensions is unacceptable.

From next year, annuity buyers will be offered one of two options. They will either be able to wait two weeks before the contract is finalised, or buy the annuity with the option of cancelling it within two weeks.

Fifty per cent of annuity buyers decide to stick with the company that provided their pension plan. Many probably do so because they were unaware of their right to shop around for the best rates.

Rates vary enormously and income in retirement depends on choosing the best.

According to Annuity Direct, the annuity adviser (071-375 1175), Royal Life and Equitable Life provide the best rates in most categories at the moment. Other best buys include Sun Life of Canada, Generali and Canada Life.

For a £100,000 outlay, Royal at present pays an annual income of £9,630 to a man aged 60 and a woman aged 55 on a joint life basis at level rates. An identical annuity from Equitable pays £9,549. For a pension that grows by 5 per cent a year, the same couple would receive an income of £9,925 from Royal and, from Generali, £9,974.

For the same money, a single man of 60 would receive a level annual income of £10,970 from Equitable, or £10,796 from Royal. If he wants his income to rise by 5 per cent a year, his initial pension would be £7,309 (Royal), or £7,305 (Equitable).

A 60-year-old woman gets £10,072 from Royal, or £9,993 from Equitable or, if she wants a 5 per cent annual increase, £6,472 and £6,247 respectively.

LIZ DOLAN

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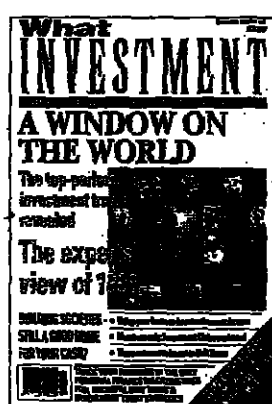
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Beware hidden costs

Sara McConnell cautions investors to check out all the charges levied on personal pension plans

Life companies will be allowed to continue hiding some of the charges they levy on personal pensions, even after they have to start telling people how much of their contribution will go in charges and salesmen's commission next year.

Bacon & Woodrow, a firm of actuaries, says investors with unit-linked personal pensions will not have to be given details of audit fees, dealing commissions and other costs that are borne by the investment fund to which the pension is linked. But these "hidden charges" can reduce the price of units and thus the value of plan holders' investments by up to 0.5 per cent, says Andrew Warwick-Thompson, of Bacon & Woodrow. If a company quotes an annual management charge of less than 0.5 per cent, investors should ask if there are other charges, Mr Warwick-Thompson says. "Some companies with apparently low annual management charges do not include the hidden charges. They will not have to disclose these as part of the rules. We believe this is a loophole."

From January 1, people buying a pension should expect companies to tell them, in cash, how much of their investment will be deducted for charges and commissions. This information will be calculated using the company's own charges rather than industry standards and will be tailored to the customer's own circumstances.

But checking one company's charges with another's will be difficult and time consuming, as firms are unlikely to issue tables showing comparisons. Comparing costs, however, will be a vital part of choosing any pension policy, Bacon & Woodrow says.

Woodrow's annual survey of unit-linked pension performance and charges shows big differences between the charges of different companies for the same type of policy. Choosing to make contributions as a series of single premiums rather than as regular premiums can also cut costs dramatically.

If you had invested a total of £1,000 with Britannia Life, the cheapest company over five years, your investment would have been reduced by 5 per cent over the period if you had chosen to pay in a series of single premiums increasing with the national average earnings index (NAEI). But if you had chosen to make regular contributions of £50 a month, again increasing with the NAEI, your contributions would have been reduced by 6.8 per cent with Equitable Life, the cheapest.

Neither of these figures includes salesmen's commission, which would increase the charges substantially. Many salesmen are keen to recommend you make regular contributions because they get more commission. The administration costs are also higher. But if you ask for your payments to be treated as a series of single premiums you will cut your costs.

Gartmore's charges, excluding commission, for recurring single premiums of £1,000 are nearly double those of Britannia over five years and more than double after 40 years. Equitable Life, which does not pay commission to its salesforce and so normally compares well with its rivals, comes out the most expensive in the survey because its figure for charges includes salesmen's bonuses.

But the costs of other types of pension pale into insignificance beside the charges levied on contributions to pensions set up to receive State Earnings Related Pension Scheme (SERPS) contributions. Some-

one with a salary of £9,000 a year — the lowest salary at which people should consider contracting out — would lose 22.4 per cent of their contribution in charges (excluding commission) from even the cheapest provider, Equitable Life, over five years.

The evidence of these charges will fuel the growing concern that millions of people on low salaries have been wrongly advised to contract out of SERPS into personal pensions. They will have seen most of their small contributions eroded by high charges.

Bacon & Woodrow started with a sample of 233 managed funds run by life companies and linked to personal pensions. Funds that had not achieved Bacon & Woodrow's criteria of "consistent, good past performance with low volatility" were gradually eliminated until 33 funds from 23 different life companies were left to have their charging structures analysed.

Bacon & Woodrow's annual pension handbook and survey will be published next month by NTC Publications (£27.50).

Family fortunes may benefit from looking at charges



Family fortunes may benefit from looking at charges



COMMENT

ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance
Editor

Bill will change rules of dating

A change to modern courtship rituals could be one side effect of the Pension Bill setting 65 as the retirement age for women.

When meeting a potential consort, a young woman will need not only to check up on his career prospects and dress sense, but also on any difference in their ages. If this gap is more than a year or two, his chances of gaining the permanent status of a significant other may receive a setback.

Girls who plan their futures precisely will require someone as close to their own age as possible, with whom they can retire simultaneously. The goal towards which couples increasingly aspire.

At present, the tendency of women to marry men several years older than themselves means that the younger wife can draw her pension at 60, at around the same time that her husband takes his. But this convenient arrangement will be disturbed when, in 2020, as the new legislation proposes, the state pension age for women is raised to 65.

Company schemes will also increasingly move to a level age for men and

women members. The indications are that more schemes will be likely to choose 65 than 60. Anyone, man or woman, who goes before the official age will suffer a reduced pension. Another consequence of equalisation will extend far beyond the dating circuit.

By turning the spotlight on the state pension, the Government has revealed its woeful inadequacy at £57.60 a week. If the pension continues to be linked to rises in prices, rather than wages, by 2020, it will be worth about 9 per cent of average earnings, against 15 per cent today. This should spur all women, especially those under 40, the group to whom equalisation will apply without concessions, to take pensions seriously.

They should use all the options available, including additional voluntary contributions, plus the various other tax-free savings schemes — in whatever shape they emerge from the Budget. Some other seemingly secure investments should, however, be approached with more caution, as the sorry performance of some unit trust funds of funds shows (page 30).

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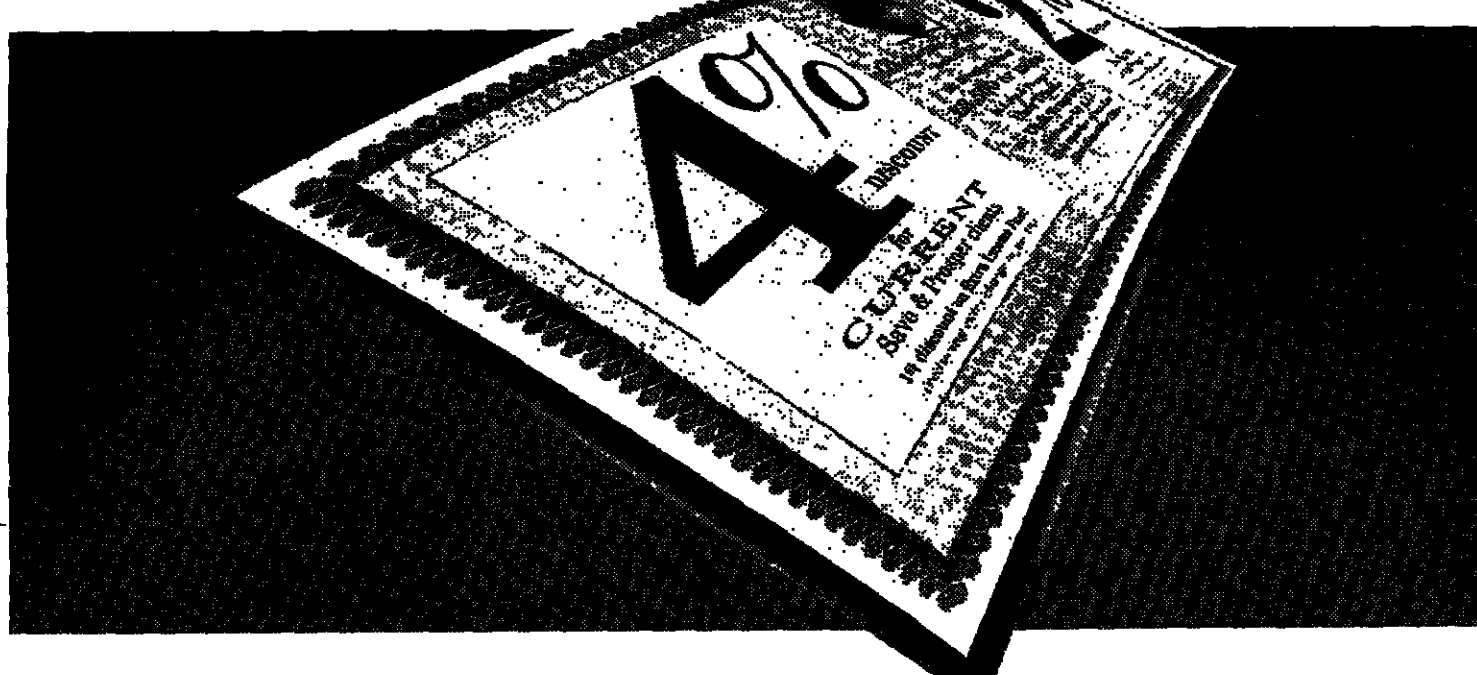
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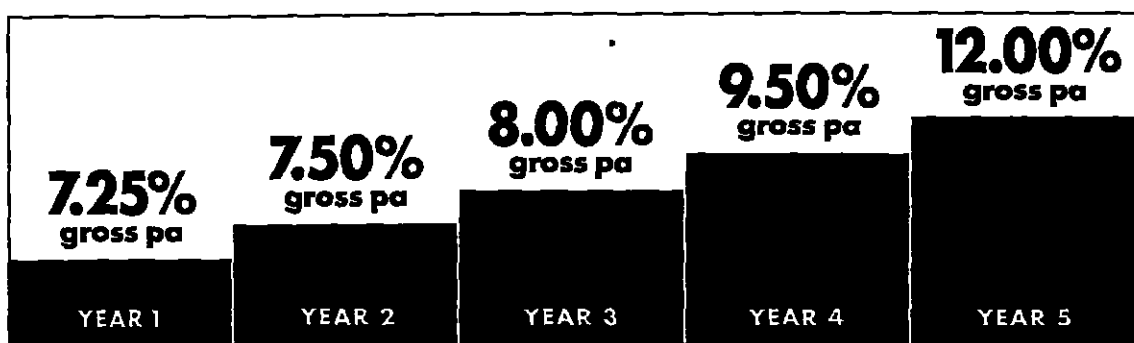
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Sara McConnell examines claims being made by a company that

Trapped by a loan

Concern is growing over the activities of Union Finance, a controversial Southend debt counsellor that promises to free borrowers from their negative equity by exploiting a loophole in mortgage indemnity policies taken out to cover the loan.

Debt advisers say that some of Union Finance's claims are "unsubstantiated" and describe its advice as "indiscriminate" and "unqualified". Some borrowers also allege they have been encouraged to apply for another loan from a new lender – as first-time buyers. Union Finance strongly denies this.

Lenders are becoming increasingly alarmed that a number of borrowers have handed their keys back after being advised by Union Finance that they could not be chased for any outstanding debt. Nationwide, which has 21 borrowers in this position, says that it has written to them promising to pursue any shortfall.

Others say the advice given by Union Finance is misleading and emphasise that they can, and will, chase borrowers for any shortfall.

Union Finance charges £300, plus VAT, to carry out its promise to free borrowers from their negative equity. The business is only regulated under the Consumer Credit Act by its local trading standards officer, not the official investment watchdogs.

The Building Societies Association, which represents lenders, says it is powerless to intervene in spite of the fact that Union Finance is operating in a field that poses risks for both borrowers and lenders, because the company is not breaking any regulation or law.

Union Finance first shot to national prominence this summer when it said that borrowers with negative equity could pay off their shortfall by claiming on their mortgage indemnity insurance. Borrowers wanting loans for more than 75 per cent of the property's value have to pay for mortgage indemnity insurance, but this pays out to the lender if the borrower defaults and the property has to be sold for less than the mortgage. The insurer whose policy has paid out can then chase the borrower for that money. If the payout under the policy does not cover the whole shortfall, lenders can chase borrowers for the outstanding debt. But Union Finance argues that sloppy wording on policies written before 1992 means the policy covers the borrower, who cannot be pursued by insurers if a lender claims under the policy. This means borrowers can hand in their keys and walk away from their debt.

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH NEGATIVE EQUITY



More than one million people still own homes that are worth less than the mortgages secured on them. They cannot move house unless they can find enough money to bridge the difference between the price a buyer is willing to pay and their outstanding mortgage debt.

UBS, the City analyst, says negative equity among homeowners totals £5.9 billion, making an average shortfall of just over £5,000 per property. But tens of thousands of borrowers wanting to move face much larger shortfalls of

£20,000 or more. Many are first or second-time buyers who have started families or changed jobs, but who are trapped in small starter homes bought at the top of the market with large mortgages in the late 1980s. Often, they do not qualify for the limited negative equity schemes now offered by lenders.

It is these people who are being targeted by Union Finance. So what are they being told? And is the advice correct or not? The Times has spoken to borrowers with negative equity who approached Union Finance, housing advisers who have dealt with many of Union Finance's clients, and lenders, who, in some cases, are having to contact borrowers who have handed back their keys.

HOW THE LUCKY, PROSPEROUS FEW ARE GIVEN A CHANCE TO LIVE

IF YOU are prepared to take on extra debt and have several thousand pounds to spare, you could pull yourself out of the negative-equity trap with one of a number of schemes offered by lenders. But they are designed to have limited appeal, with lenders targeting those they think can afford extra monthly commitment and big moving costs.

Abbey National says: "Borrowers have to have a fairly exemplary repayment record. The scheme assumes everything else is in place and the only reason you can't move is because you have negative equity". An estimated

1,000 borrowers have been accepted so far. Abbey's scheme, similar to those from the Halifax and the Nationwide, allows you to borrow up to 125 per cent of the value of the new home. You must sell your old home and buy your new one in one go, taking negative equity from one to the next. If you are trading up, you will almost certainly need a bigger income and you will also have to pay a new mortgage indemnity premium, selling and buying costs and possibly find a deposit.

The Halifax says a borrower taking out an average £50,000 mortgage for

100 per cent of a new property's value can expect to pay a valuation fee of £125, legal fees of up to £400 and a mortgage indemnity premium of £906. Estate agent's costs would be between £500 and £1,000 on a £50,000 loan.

Woolwich borrowers can apply for a loan of up to 125 per cent of their new home's value or buy a house valued at no more than that of their current home, substituting one for another. To trade up, they must pay the extra from savings. An alternative is Parentline, where a borrower's parents transfer negative equity to their own property.

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Where are the 300 successful clients?

Over recent months, Union Finance has made a series of claims, both to borrowers visiting its Southend offices and publicly in the press and on television. It says it has helped more than 300 people, but has yet to respond to a request by *The Times* to be put in contact with someone who has successfully relieved themselves of their negative equity and taken out a new mortgage. Many remain unconvinced by the company's arguments. The concerns of debt advisers, consumer groups, solicitors and lenders focus on the following areas:

■ **Union Finance's financial claims.** The company says the vast majority of pre-1992 mortgage indemnity contracts are worded so that they cover the borrower. It follows that an insurer paying out to a lender cannot then turn and chase the borrower for money it has paid on the borrower's behalf. Union Finance also says lenders have broken their contract with borrowers because they are not allowing them to see their actual mortgage indemnity policy. John Sheppard, a director of Union Finance, argues the mortgage indemnity is an "integral part of the mortgage" and lenders are not "evidencing" them because they are afraid borrowers would realise the insurance was for their benefit.

But, so far, these issues have not been legally tested. There have been two court cases, neither involving Union Finance. Both concerned borrowers in arrears. In both cases, one in the Court of Appeal (The Mortgage Corporation v. Sharratt), the judge ruled that the mortgage indemnity insurance, from Sun Alliance, covered the lender not the borrower. Lord Justice Staughton said in his judgment that "it seems inconceivable that an insurance company would be stupid enough to provide insurance in favour of individuals in the event of their not paying their debts".

Phil Harris, housing advice officer at Colchester Borough Council, who has talked to many Union Finance clients over recent months, says: "There is no evidence that the company is advising clients of the risks involved in relying on the courts to reject creditors' money claims, and Union Finance has not informed clients of the Court of Appeal ruling on the Sun Alliance policy." But Mr Sheppard argues the cases are not relevant to Union Finance because the majority of its customers are not in arrears and facing repossession, but simply have negative equity.

To support its claim that

lenders are in breach of contract by not showing borrowers mortgage indemnity policies, Union Finance says it is relying on comments made in a repossession hearing at Southend County Court in January this year when the judge ruled that Abbey National had a duty to disclose the mortgage indemnity policy as part of "full and proper discovery".

Lenders persist in not showing the contracts. Only a series of test cases on different policies will show who is right.

■ **Advice to individual borrowers.** Union Finance maintains all pre-1992 mortgage indemnity contracts are worded in a standard way. Insurers say this is not true. The Association of British Insurers says: "There were variations in the terms and wordings of the policies. They were not all the same."

All the customers *The Times* spoke to had been shown just one policy, from Sun Alliance. Union Finance's Mr Sheppard says the company has "95 per cent" of the contracts from different companies, although at least one borrower says she was told the company had great difficulty getting hold of copies of policies.

■ **Lenders in court.** Union Finance promises to negotiate with lenders on the borrower's behalf. It claims most lenders will not take clients to court through fear of having to reveal the terms of their mortgage indemnity contracts and would waive their claim to any shortfall.

One couple, Julian and Kate Turner, say they were told that all the company needed to do was "wave the indemnity policy in court" - as soon as they [lenders] see it, they will back off.

Another borrower, who prefers not to be named, was told the lender would agree to a shortfall on the sale "because it wouldn't want it to come out that the mortgage indemnity was the borrower's policy".

Lenders say this is not



Peter Walker, left, and John Sheppard say that Union Finance has helped more than 300 people

correct. The Halifax, the largest lender, says: "We would pursue people who willfully defaulted and handed in their keys." The Abbey National says: "All lenders are actively pursuing people for any shortfall." Nationwide says borrowers handing in keys have to sign a form making it clear they are still liable for any shortfall. Lenders also reject Union Finance's claim that borrowers cannot be chased if they give them "28 days' legal notice" before handing in their keys.

Paul Jenkins and Howard Meek, of Jenkins and Meek, a Herefordshire firm of solicitors, are acting for a number of Union Finance clients, who claim to have followed the company's advice then run into difficulties. It says: "We had a client who, before talking to us, had been advised that he could walk away and hand in his keys to the building society, ignoring his mortgage. He was just about to complete a house purchase with a new mortgage."

"If he had done this, he would have been liable to meet the repayments for two mortgages. Another client, acting on similar advice, had received a mortgage offer and found a new house to buy then found the new lender would not advance any money until the old mortgage had been paid off."

■ **The shortfall.** Mortgage indemnity contracts allow for only a 25 per cent drop in house prices. When the loss is larger, the lender can chase the borrower for the shortfall if the mortgage indemnity has paid out. The debt will contin-

ue to accrue interest until it is paid off. How does handing in your keys absolve borrowers from this?

According to Union Finance, the mortgage indemnity insurance earns interest so the shortfall will be met in full. Insurers say this is not correct.

■ **Getting a new loan.** Borrowers who default on their loan face being blacklisted and may find it impossible to get another loan. Several borrowers contacted by *The Times* felt they were being encouraged to reapply as first time buyers. Julian Turner says: "They said, 'you can reapply as a first-time buyer because you haven't got a property.'"

Another borrower said: "They said 'some of our customers are taking advantage of particularly good first-time buyer offers.'"

Peter Walker, director of Union Finance, was questioned on this point in a recent interview on BBC Radio Essex. He made it clear that he believed a borrower who had previously had a mortgage but did not at present was not a first-time buyer and should not pretend to be so.

Mr Sheppard categorically denies that he or his colleagues had encouraged people to apply as first-time buyers. "We do not under any circumstances advocate this. We have got to be squeaky clean."

Mr Harris, of Colchester Borough Council, says: "In view of the number of people complaining to me - and the fact that there are remarkable similarities between each of the accounts - serious questions ought to be raised."

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Help on the cards

Credit card issuers
could be liable for
foreign transactions
that go wrong.

Liz Dolan writes

Barclaycard's TV advertisements give the impression that credit card holders are cocooned in a protective ring each time they venture overseas. Snakebite? No problem. The flying doctor is there in no time. Banged up in a Third World prison? Jail-busting Barclays will have you out in a trice.

But buy faulty goods from anyone other than a UK retailer and the protective ring disintegrates. This is in spite of an Office of Fair Trading ruling that credit card issuers could well be liable for foreign transactions that go wrong.

When Ron and Aline Smythe bought two military campaign chests while holidaying in India in 1993, they were assured by the retailer that delivery to their home in Northern Ireland would cost only £60. In the event, they were charged £331.50.

They claimed the difference from Barclaycard under the terms of Section 75 of the Consumer Credit Act, which holds credit providers jointly responsible with retailers for faulty goods and services. Barclaycard rejected their claim on the ground that the act covers only UK transactions.

Yorkshire Bank used the same argument to reject a similar claim from David Makin, a Visa cardholder, after he was caught out by a timeshare operator in Spain. Sir Bryan Carsberg, Director-General of Fair Trading, says credit card firms are breaking the law by not accepting what he maintains is a clear obligation to recompense users who have problems with



Stanley and Betty Hartog got a £500 cheque from Atlantic Visa virtually by return post

foreign retailers. He is adamant that Section 75, which relates to all credit card transactions between £100 and £30,000, applies to any purchase, not just those made in the UK.

Replying to claims by card issuers earlier this year that the law was open to interpretation, he said: "I have reached the firm view that, as it currently stands, the law is neither unclear nor ambiguous." Issuers that refused to meet legitimate claims were "in breach of their legal obligations".

The Credit Card Research Group (CCRG), which speaks for 95 per cent of UK credit card companies, says that members always win when angry customers take them to court over Section 75 disagreements.

Stanley and Betty Hartog, who paid £266 for a laquered cabinet and a wall "whatnot" in China four years ago, initially failed to elicit compensation from their credit card company, Atlantic Visa. However, after reading Sir Bryan's

interpretation of the Consumer Credit Card Act this year, they decided to take the company to the small claims court. Before the case could be heard, Atlantic offered to pay up in full "as a gesture of goodwill".

Mr Hartog turned down the offer and demanded £500. To his astonishment, a cheque for £500 turned up "virtually by return of post". He says he wishes he had asked for more.

The banks argue that Section 75 was never meant to be applied outside UK shores. It was drafted before the days of the globe-trotting credit card holder and was meant primarily to protect people when buying cars, or signing hire purchase agreements.

Elizabeth Phillips, of the CCRG, says: "The problem with overseas cases is largely one of collecting evidence. There is no reason for the retailer to co-operate because they aren't covered by our laws." Barclays says: "The most obvious point is that retailers abroad have no agree-

ment with us. They are signed up with the banks over there. We have no control over their behaviour."

Mr Smythe says: "How they can maintain that they have no agreement with the vendor when my campaign chests were charged to my Barclaycard Visa account is beyond me." Mr Makin adds: "If the banks do not regard Section 75 as applicable to overseas transactions they should make this clear in their conditions."

To date, card issuers have maintained a united front on this matter. But, when questioned for this article, Save & Prosper, part of the Robert Fleming banking group, conceded that a "grey area" is developing as far as the European Union is concerned. It says: "If you want to court you would probably find there could be a liability if you were asked to settle a claim involving a transaction made in Europe. The chances are we would settle an EU dispute on an ex gratia basis."

GET LOOKS AT OVERSEAS LIABILITY

SIR Bryan Carsberg is reviewing Section 75 at the request of the Department of Trade and Industry. Recommendations based on the results of a public meeting with all interested parties in September are due to be published in the next few months. The OFT's initial thoughts on overseas liability, published this year, included the following: "For card issuers to argue that there are no pre-existing or contemplated arrangements between them and overseas suppliers is disingenuous. It is

for card issuers to be satisfied in advancing their payment facilities to overseas suppliers, whether their own or via another merchant acquirer, as to the status of that overseas supplier. It is therefore not for the consumer to be penalised for card issuers' failure to take appropriate care over the status of suppliers. This requires emphasis, since card issuers invariably make a strong point in their promotional material about the ease with which their cards can be used worldwide."

SMALL claims courts were set up to help members of the public seeking to reclaim debts worth less than £1,000. County courts have leaflets on the process and will also supply claim forms. Court staff will give help with filling in the form. Contested cases are heard before a district judge. The whole process is intended to be as relaxed and easy-to-follow as possible for laymen and women. Costs range between £10 and £65, depending on the amount claimed.

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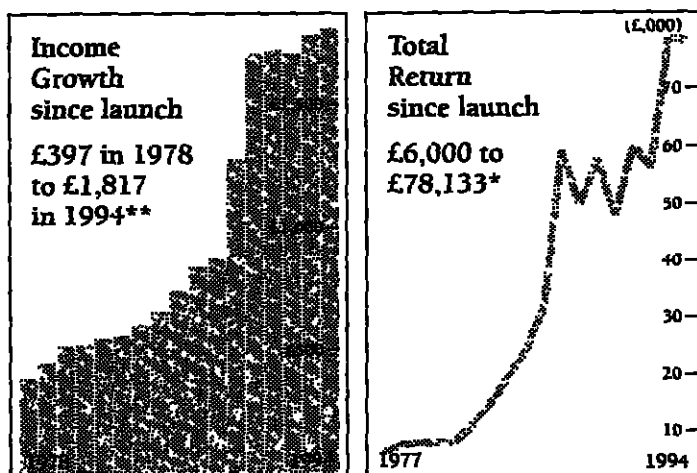
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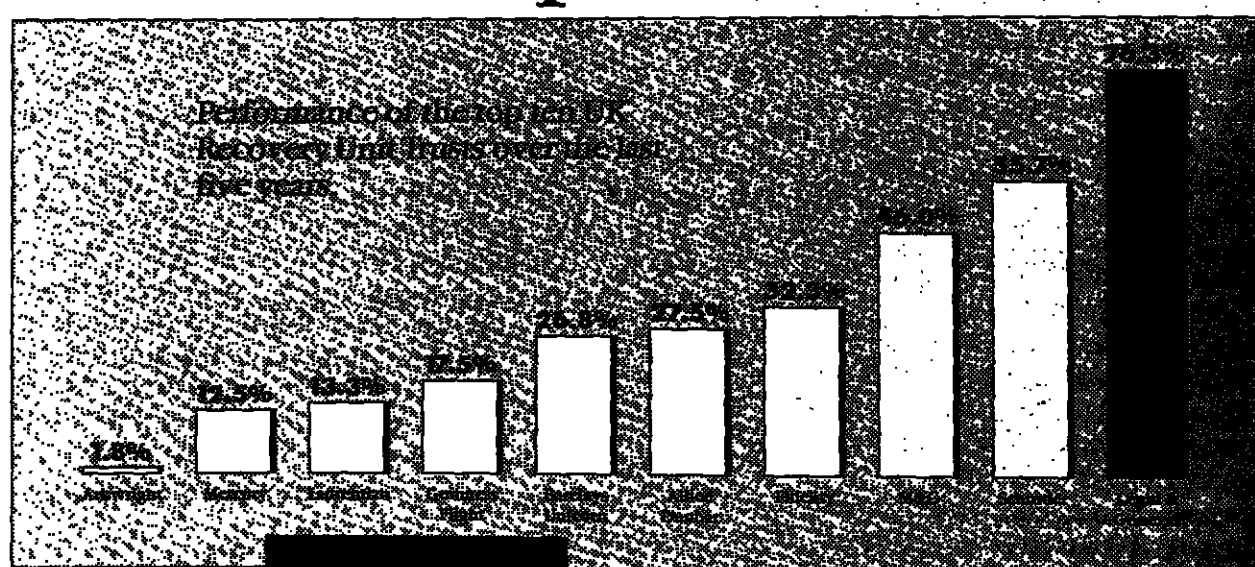
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Is the new national gamble making too much of its charitable connections? Robert Miller reports

Charities lash out at lottery

Britain's 170,000 registered charities are angry about the way the National Lottery has linked itself to the charitable theme to sell tickets. They say they stand to lose tens of millions of pounds a year in donations because of what they consider to be misleading advertising by the National Lottery.

Ticket sales are way beyond official estimates, by late yesterday afternoon, more than £35 million worth were sold. The jackpot in tonight's first televised draw for the lottery will certainly be £5 million, and possibly even more.

Charities acknowledge that higher ticket sales mean a bigger slice of money for the five designated good causes — the arts, sports, charities, National Heritage, and the Millennium Fund. It has emerged, however, that the money may not start to be distributed until late next year.

But what really concerns charities is that, as a result of selling National Lottery tickets on a charity theme, ad hoc donations may dry up. Vicki Pulman, of the Charities Aid Foundation, says: "Our concern is that purchasers of National Lottery tickets are not aware of how little is going to a few specialist charities."

Stephen Lee, director of the Institute of Charity Fund Raising Managers, which last week reported the National Lottery to the Advertising Standards Authority for overstressing the charity theme, says: "We are not killjoys, but we want people to play the lottery for what it is. We are

very concerned that the public continues to give to charities in an efficient and effective way. Independent research by Barclays Bank shows that between £170 million and £290 million could be deflected away from charities. Based on official estimates that up to £150 million a year could be channelled into the good causes through the lottery, charities will be net losers."

Neville Bass, chief executive of the Charity Christmas Card Council which is owned by 110 charities, adds: "It is important that people realise how little of the lottery money is actually going to charity, in spite of using the charitable theme to promote ticket sales."

Stuart Etherington, director of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, which represents 630 national charities, is also concerned that the Government could reduce funding to charities as a result of the lottery. He says: "We are watching developments very closely. If it appears that we are losing out, we will lobby for a share of the Government's take."

Charles Wykes, head of lending at the Leeds Permanent Building Society, which, through its Visa affinity card, has raised more than £5 million for three charities, says he finds it hard to see why it should take so long to distribute the lottery proceeds to charity. As a separate fund-raising exercise from its Visa card, the Leeds is hoping to hand over at least £200,000 to NCH Action for Children. For every loan granted between



Charity projects may suffer as a result of the Lottery

now and the end of the month, the society will donate £25. It has already earmarked more than £150,000 for the charity, which helps homeless young people. He says: "We will be giving the money straight to the charity in the run-up to Christmas. The Government must also be very careful to get the balance right and make sure that the lottery broadens the real base of charitable donations rather than re-allocating the same pot."

Dee Sullivan, of Christian Aid, says: "The National Lottery will pass on around 5p for every £1 ticket sold to a small number of charities. Meanwhile, the Government is getting a fixed 12p in the pound."

"We would like potential donors to continue to give to charity in a more efficient way, such as through covenants or Gift Aid. Gift Aid allows you to

make a one-off, lump sum gift of £250, or more, to charity. The particular charity can then claim back the basic rate of tax from the Inland Revenue."

Ms Sullivan says: "This way of giving helps charities to plan ahead and finance long-term projects in the knowledge that there will be a steady income stream."

HOW TO HELP CHARITY

CHARITIES are continually surprised by, and grateful for, the British public's consistently generous response to disaster appeals. But important though the instant appeals are, they represent only a small part of most charities' work. Charities also desperately need donations to fund longer-term projects, such as vital medical research or building an irrigation system in a drought-stricken country.

To make it easier for charities to tap into a regular income stream, the Government has encouraged people and companies to make donations through the Payroll Giving and Gift Aid schemes. In turn, the Inland Revenue grants tax relief on the donations.

Payroll Giving, or Give-As-You-Earn as it is sometimes known, allows you to give to a charity of your choice directly from your pay and to get tax relief on the donation. Your employer, who must agree to operate the scheme, deducts the gift from your pay packet or pension before tax. The most you can give in any one year is £900. Relief is given at your highest rate of tax.

Gift Aid allows individuals and companies to make one-off lump sum donations to a charity, which is then able to reclaim the tax paid by the donor. The gift must be at least £250, which must be the amount you actually pay to the charity

after basic rate tax. The charity then claims the tax back from the Revenue. There are other tax-efficient ways of giving to charity. One popular method is to leave a legacy to a charity or charities of your choice in your will. All outright gifts and bequests to UK charities are completely free of inheritance tax. You could also consider making a deed of covenant to a charity whereby you pay a regular amount to a charity over at least four years and the charity can claim the tax relief.

Alternatively, you could open a personal charity account with the Charities Aid Foundation. The account is opened by making a donation to CAF, itself a registered charity, by using one of the available schemes, such as Give-As-You-Earn, a deed of covenant or Gift Aid. Donations can then be distributed using a "cheque" book, standing order or the new CAF CharityCard, a debit card launched in September.

The money can be given to any charitable organisation or causes registered with the Charity Commission. Further information: Free leaflets on tax efficient ways to give to charity are available from local tax offices or inquiry centres. Local libraries may also have copies. The Revenue also operates a Gift Aid helpline on 051-472 6038 and a Charity Division Helpline on 051-472 6037.

The Charities Aid Foundation is on 0732 771333.

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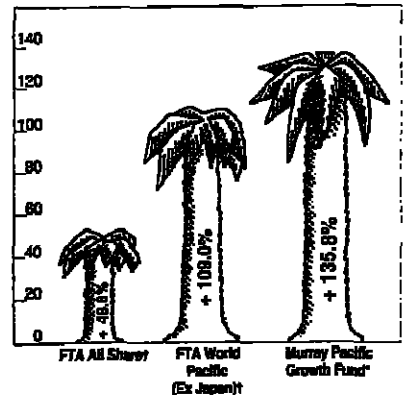
Card type	Fee pa	apr %	Interest rates APR pchse %	APR cash %	Cash w/ds Fee	Min chrg	Interest Free period	How Int chgd	Made on opening	Donations % of pchses
Amnesty International - Cooperative Bank	nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.20
Arts Card - Midland Bank	nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25
M/Cd nil	2.00	26.80	28.70	1.5	£1.50	56 days	A	£5.00	0.25	0.25
Bank of Scotland Affinity Groups	nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25
M/Cd nil	1.83	22.42	24.92	2.0	£1.50	50 days	A	Variable		
Carecard - Midland Bank	nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25
M/Cd nil	2.00	26.80	28.70	1.5	*	-	56 days	B	£5.00	0.25
Feed the Children - Cooperative Bank	nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25
Visa nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25	0.25
Help the Aged - Cooperative Bank	nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25
Visa nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25	0.25
Labour Party - Cooperative Bank	nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25
Visa nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25	0.25
Leeds Visa - Leeds Building Society	£12	1.42	19.90	21.72	1.5	£1.50	56 days	A	£5.00	0.20
Liberal Democrats - Cooperative Bank	nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25
Visa nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25	0.25
National Trust - Midland Bank	nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25
M/Cd nil	2.00	26.80	28.70	1.5	£1.50	56 days	A	£5.00	0.25	0.25
Oxfam - Cooperative Bank	nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25
Visa nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25	0.25
RSPB - Cooperative Bank	nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25
Visa nil	1.70	22.42	24.92	2.0	nil	46 days	A	£5.00	0.25	0.25

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Case of the missing certificate

A price may have to be paid if share documents go missing. Jill Insley reports on flaws in the system

Should you lose a share certificate, even through no fault of your own, the share registrars may still try to charge you for a replacement. In an episode that exposes defects in the system for the distribution of share certificates, Bertram Jones, a pensioner from the Wirral, in Cheshire, found that Lloyds Bank Registrars wanted a £15 fee for issuing a replacement BT3 certificate, after the original went missing in the post. It had been sent out by second-class post.

Mr Jones, who became aware that his certificate had gone astray when his wife, Barbara, received the certificate for her own BT3 shares, says: "If I had lost the certificate myself, the charge might have seemed reasonable, but as I hadn't even laid eyes on it, I felt aggrieved."

Mr Jones says that he always sends certificates by recorded delivery when selling shares and believes that all registrars should consider making that their practice.

Although share certificates have no value of their own, a shareholder must produce the certificate when selling shares to prove that he or she is the rightful owner and legally entitled to dispose of the shares.

After the intervention of *The Times*, Ralph Walrond, managing director of Lloyds Bank Registrars, agreed to waive the fee.

Mr Walrond says: "We get many hundreds of calls over the months from shareholders who believe they have lost their certificates. When we say there will be a charge for a replacement, they have another look around the house and often find the certificate."

Mr Walrond says that Lloyds Bank Registrars prefer to allow shareholders to query whether they should pay the fee, rather than volunteering up-front to waive it. However, he says that in a few cases, in which the certificate has gone missing before reaching the shareholder, the registrar is happy to replace the certificate for free.

Stuart Valentine, director of research at ProShare — a body that promotes private share ownership — says that certificates are posted at the risk of the shareholder.

Besides asking for a fee for replacement certificate, share registrars also require an indemnity — for example a guarantee from a bank — against the possibility of fraud. The indemnity protects against the original or replacement certificate falling into the hands of someone who is not the legal owner. If those shares

are then sold, the indemnity ensures that when the holding is claimed by the true owner, he or she is reimbursed.

Indemnities can be costly for small shareholders. To help such shareholders to save money, registrars often arrange blanket insurance to protect against the loss of small shareholdings. Lloyds Bank Registrars charge £10 to insure duplicate certificates on shareholdings of £5,000 or less.

Most stockbrokers offer the option of a "nominee" service, which registers clients' shareholdings in the name of the stockbroker's nominee company. The stockbroker holds the share certificate, usually in a theftproof and fireproof environment, provides the client with regular statements about his or her shareholding and collects dividends. When the shareholder instructs the stockbroker to sell the shares, the deal can be made immediately because the stockbroker does not have to wait for the arrival of a certificate.

However, even if the shareholder uses a nominee service, the stockbroker may hold the share certificate while in the post.

Fidelity Brokerage Services operates a mandatory designated nominee service that designates shareholdings to individual shareholders' accounts. Judith McMichael, business development director for Fidelity Brokerage Services, says: "There are some customers who are not thrilled with the nominee service, but they use us because they like the other benefits."



Bertram and Barbara Jones, whose BT3 share certificate went missing in the post

BRITAIN is set to eliminate share certificates, with investors' holdings noted electronically, much as banks record cash deposits.

The move to a paperless system has been under way for several years, beset by problems. The Stock Exchange's first attempt, Taurus, collapsed in March 1993, overwhelmed by a virtually incomprehensible system.

After this £100 million debacle, the Bank of England took responsibility for developing a workable alternative. Crest is due to become fully operational at the end of 1995. Shareholders will have to pay for shares within five, or even three, days of purchase, instead of ten, as now. The paperless system will not be compulsory, so private shareholders can still opt for certificates. Stephen Allen, of Waters Lunniss, the East

Anglian stockbroker, says: "A paperless system has got to be good for stockbroking. But I think it will upset shareholders because they like to have proof of their assets in their possession."

Judith McMichael, of Fidelity Brokerage Services, expects a paperless system to be more efficient and cheaper in the long run. Cost savings could be passed on to private shareholders as lower charges and new services. She says: "Moving to a paperless system is absolutely the way to go. We are the only major market that does not operate in that way."

Bertram Jones, the BT3 shareholder whose certificate was lost, is more sceptical about benefits of a paperless system. He says: "It's nice to have a bit of paper. One hears a lot about electronic fraud these days."

The indexed rise for calculating the indexation allowance on assets disposed of in October 1994

Month purchased	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
January	-	0.758	0.672	0.592	0.509	0.452	0.408
February	-	0.750	0.665	0.585	0.503	0.446	0.400
March	0.828	0.747	0.660	0.585	0.501	0.443	0.395
April	0.792	0.723	0.638	0.532	0.487	0.428	0.372
May	0.779	0.716	0.632	0.525	0.480	0.421	0.367
June	0.774	0.711	0.628	0.522	0.476	0.417	0.362
July	0.773	0.702	0.630	0.525	0.480	0.421	0.361
August	0.773	0.695	0.614	0.521	0.484	0.422	0.348
September	0.774	0.687	0.611	0.521	0.477	0.418	0.339
October	0.765	0.681	0.601	0.519	0.475	0.411	0.328
November	0.757	0.675	0.598	0.514	0.462	0.404	0.320
December	0.760	0.671	0.598	0.512	0.468	0.408	0.318
1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994		
January	0.208	0.215	0.175	0.077	0.053	0.029	
February	0.209	0.208	0.109	0.085	0.046	0.022	
March	0.208	0.198	0.105	0.082	0.042	0.019	
April	0.270	0.181	0.091	0.046	0.033	0.007	
May	0.283	0.151	0.088	0.042	0.029	0.003	
June	0.259	0.148	0.083	0.042	0.030	0.003	
July	0.257	0.145	0.085	0.046	0.032	0.003	
August	0.254	0.138	0.083	0.045	0.028	0.003	
September	0.246	0.123	0.079	0.042	0.023	0.001	
October	0.238	0.114	0.075	0.038	0.024		
November	0.225	0.117	0.071	0.039	0.025		
December	0.222	0.118	0.070	0.043	0.023		

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Income-seeking investors are being urged to try fixed-interest stocks, Anne Ashworth reports

Gilts are back in favour

Suddenly, the tide of sentiment has turned in favour of gilts. A fast growing band of enthusiasts is recommending that the thousands of investors who need an income should be buying gilts now to benefit from the high yield currently available — and the low prices.

Behind this new-found popularity lies the conviction, among analysts, that inflation is under control, producing a climate in which gilts, fixed-interest stocks issued by the Bank of England to fund government spending, can flourish. At present, gilts are yielding about 8 per cent, giving a real yield above inflation of close to 6 per cent.

Gilt followers were further cheered this week by the rise in American interest rates, which they took as proof of the US Administration's determination to crush inflation.

Even the chance that Labour may come to power at the next election does not depress the gilt fans, as they feel that there would be no about-turn in inflation policy in the UK.

They also have few fears about the forthcoming Budget. If, as predicted, Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor moves to lower the public sector borrowing requirement, this will be more good news for gilts, as a reduced number of new stocks will need to be

issued, strengthening the price of existing gilt issues.

Yet, amid this euphoria, there are a few dissenters who question why, if the outlook is so bright, gilt prices are not improving more swiftly — since January the market has fallen by about 19 per cent.

Certain economists also take a much less optimistic view of inflation. Michael Burke, of Citibank, for one, believes that that inflation will be averaging about 3.5 per cent next year. Others are more pessimistic.

However, that will not stop the sales drives now beginning among fund managers, aimed at encouraging us to invest in the 50 or so gilt trusts now on offer. Save & Prosper, for example, sees its trust as appealing especially to those who want to improve the return on their savings but do not want the risk of equities.

Here, however, Peter Jeffries, a unit trust analyst at Fund Research, sounds a note of caution. "Over almost every single measurement period available, gilt unit trusts have underperformed equity unit trusts. This important detail is often concealed by fund managers who display performance figures with income reinvested. But, for most people, the whole point of investing in a gilt unit trust is that you take out the income, you do not reinvest it."



Analysts detect a climate in which the stocks issued by the Bank of England can flourish

Zero in on high capital growth

Bored with building societies and too nervous to try equities? Go for zero dividend preference shares, says John Szymanski, investment trust analyst at Credit Lyonnais Laing.

Zeros are investment trust shares that do not pay dividends but, instead, promise a predetermined rate of return up to a fixed redemption price at the end of the life of the trust. All zeros have lives of less than ten years. They are safer than ordinary shares because holders get first bite if the trust goes under.

They are now looking reasonably cheap, with a number offering more than 10 per cent capital growth. Their current affordability stems from expectations of a rise in interest rates, which has focused investors' attentions on bank-based investments, sparking a fall in the popularity — and consequently the price — of zeros.

Returns on zero dividend preference shares are extremely attractive to wealthier people as they are taxed as capital gains and not income. This allows investors a tax-free income of £5,800 a year. For those not already taking up their CGT allowance, a zero making a 10 per cent annual return in a trust with ten years to run will thus supply £58,000 free of tax over the decade.

Zeros in M&G's Income investment trust cost 53p each, with the promise of a 102.6p payout in November 2001. This effectively doubles shareholders' money in seven years. Importantly, there are already enough assets in this particular trust to cover payments to zero dividend shareholders of up to 119p a share.

M&G Recovery Trust zeros, currently 69p, are promising a return of 150p in April 2002, or 11.2 per cent. In exchange for this higher return, shareholders have to accept a slightly higher level of risk as only 88 per cent of the eventual payout is already covered by assets.

Even less risky, but over a shorter period, zeros in River Plate and General, currently 86.75p, will pay 100p a share in October 1996. That is a more modest annual return of 7.68 per cent but, with 269p a share already in the kitty, assets will have to fall 40 per cent a year to preclude payment.

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FOR those who wish to make their own choice, we canvassed the views of a three leading gilt and bond market watchers.

Doug Jones, international bond strategist at NatWest Capital Markets. He believes that the principal reason for buying gilts now is the "real high yields on offer. My view would be that you start to put money into assets when they get cheaper. I would not say that you should commit a great deal of money at first, because, over the short-term, there still could be significant risks."

Mr Jones points out that there is more risk involved in buying longer dated stocks, those that mature (that is, reach repayment) at a date more than ten years hence. But as a result, the yields are somewhat higher. The

Treasury 2004 6½% stock is, for example, yielding 8.55 per cent. Shorter dated issues offer greater certainty and correspondingly lower yields. Treasury 8½% 1997 yields 8.05 per cent, for instance.

Steven Briscoe, bond analyst at SG Warburg. "I think that it's a good time to be buying gilts — I'm in that camp which says that inflation is going to stay low. The US and the UK are both aiming at the same time to keep the lid on inflation — that's an unprecedented policy stance. Gilts are yielding around 8 to 8.5 per cent which, after you take inflation of 2.4 per cent into account, gives you a real return of at least 5.5 per cent. Show me a fund manager who guarantees to deliver anything like that figure." Mr

Briscoe cites Treasury 6½% 1999, currently yielding 8.41 per cent.

Andrew Roberts, gilts analyst at UBS. "We're forecasting that inflation is going to rise, so eroding the capital value of conventional gilts. Index-linked gilts, however, are one of the most tax-efficient investments around, especially for a higher-rate taxpayer. All conventional gilts are repaid at their maturity date at par, that is at the face value of the stock, not the price you paid. But with an index-linked gilt, the face value is adjusted in line with inflation. This means that, if inflation averages 3.6 per cent, for every £200 worth of the index-linked stock 2½ 1996 bought now, you will receive back £224. There is no capital gains tax to pay on this increase."

WHERE TO GO

BOTH conventional and index-linked gilt-edged stocks can be bought through stockbrokers, but, for smaller amounts of stock, the National Savings Stocks Register, which operates through post offices, can be cheaper. The commission payable for a purchase of £1,000 worth of stock would be £4, for £5,000 worth, £20 and for £10,000 worth, £40. For more details, read *Government Stock*, a free National Savings guide available from post offices.

The Bank of England also publishes *Investing in Gilts*, a guide for the small investor. For a copy, telephone 071-601 4878.

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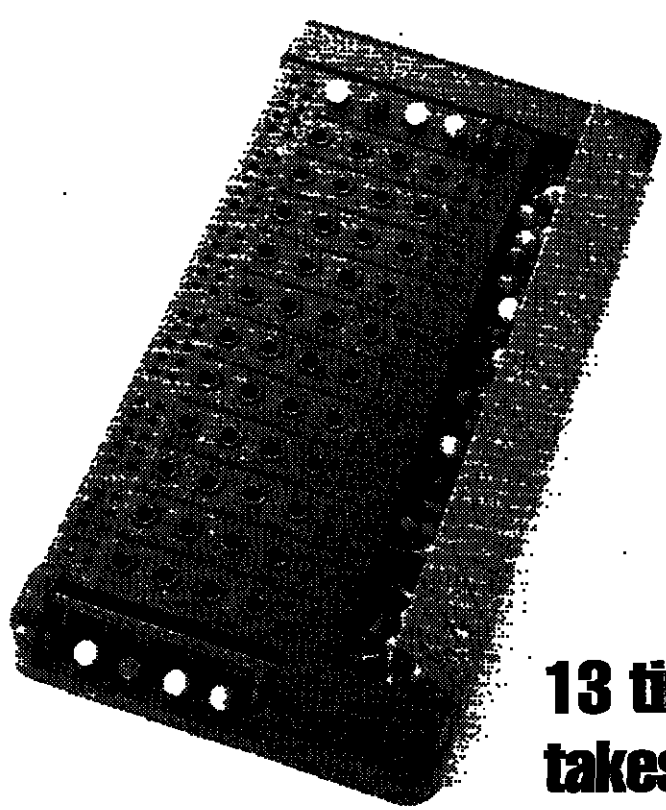
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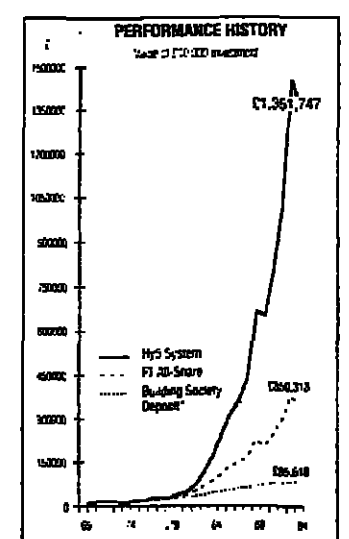
Take a look at the graph. Most UK unit trusts (the most common PEP investment) fail even to match the index. The Hy5 system has outperformed it by an average 8.7% per annum since 1969. Through stockmarket crashes, recession and wars.

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The illustrated returns relate to accumulated performance of the Hy5 and Hy1 systems and take no account of share transaction charges or the management fee which is charged to the Hy5 and Hy1 PEPs. The inclusion of charges would inevitably depress historic performance. Past performance is no guarantee of future success, the value of investments and the income from them can go down as well as up and investors may not get back the full amount invested. Tax concessions are subject to statutory change and depend on personal circumstances. All data is sourced from Datastream and covers the period 31/12/69 to 30/06/94. Reference to "the index" relates to the FT-SE All-Share Index. "Building Society deposit rate is average rate on ordinary shares (Bank of Scotland). Mastermind is a registered trademark owned by Invicta Toys & Games Ltd and used under licence.

WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

PIA ombudsman determined pension victims will not be two-time losers

From the Personal Investment Authority Ombudsman

Sir, With regard to the mis-selling of personal pensions and the PIA ombudsman scheme, there is a danger that continual criticism of so-called flaws in the PIA ombudsman scheme may prejudice members of the public by dissuading them from using the free and impartial conciliation and adjudication service offered by this bureau. The criticisms, which may have begun life as part of a campaign to stop the scheme being set up at all, rarely mention the advantages which it enjoys over other comparable ones, or the steps being taken to address the perceived disadvantages. It is time to set the record straight by referring to both.

The constitution of the PIA Ombudsman Bureau follows the recommendations of Lord Ackner (a distinguished retired law lord) in his Report on a Unified Complaints Procedure, which persuasively explained the reasons for his proposals. I have yet to see the points he made addressed by any critic.

My function is that of a conciliator and adjudicator. I am not a regulator; that is the role of the PIA. Summarised, my terms of reference require me to receive complaints about breaches of the law and

a substantial quantity of material which has been issued or approved by PIA (much of which is not legally binding), and about "other malpractice". I am required to give the complainant the benefit of the result produced by the non-legally binding material, if that is better for him than what the law provides. My decisions bind the PIA member but not the investor, unless he accepts them.

It is true that my present terms of reference, unlike those applicable to me during my seven years as building societies ombudsman, do not expressly require me to come to a decision which is in my opinion fair in all the circumstances.

However, critics perhaps fail to appreciate the consequences of the fact that most pensions complaints fundamentally relate to mis-selling, which is investment business regulated under the Financial Services Act 1986. The regulators, including PIA, have issued voluminous rules and other guidance, which often requires their members to act in a fair way. To take but one example, the Securities and Investments Board's statements of principle require firms to observe high standards of integrity and fair dealing. Financial services

which do not constitute investment business (for example, deposits and mortgages) are not subject to similar rules and guidance, so the "fair in all the circumstances" provision is less important to me than to other ombudsmen who deal with unregulated business.

SIB referred to this concern, and the financial limits mentioned below, when announcing its recognition of PIA. It said that it was content that the arrangements for complaints handling would be effective. However, it also added that it expected PIA and me to discuss these areas again, with a view to future amendment if necessary. We shall, of course, be doing exactly that, and I shall ask for any extension of my powers which experience shows to be necessary.

It is also correct that the maximum amount I am able to award is £50,000, which can include up to £750 for distress and inconvenience. The insurance, banking and building societies ombudsmen can award up to £100,000, with no limit on the figure for distress and inconvenience. Critics make much of the difference but do not mention the equally numerous other schemes where the limit is £50,000 or less; or my power to recom-

mend payment of higher sums and my ability to report non-compliance to the regulator, PIA.

One main advantage of the PIA ombudsman scheme over the others with which it is compared is that I can make awards against intermediaries as well as financial institutions, so providing the complainant with "one-stop shopping" and avoiding the need to go to court to obtain compensation against an independent financial adviser who is at fault. Another is that membership of the PIA scheme is compulsory: no fly-by-night operator can avoid compensation by refusing to join.

I do not say that the PIA ombudsman scheme, unlike every other human institution, is perfect in every respect. But I do think that many of the critics, including Jean Eaglesham (Weekend Money, November 12), have not presented the full story. The headline of her article was "Will pension victims lose again?" I am determined that the answer to that question will be a resounding no. Yours faithfully, STEPHEN EDELL, PIA Ombudsman, Personal Investment Authority Ombudsman Bureau, No 1 London Wall, EC2.



Credit where credit is due

From Mr B. James
Sir, Even the devil deserves his/her due. Banks seem to have had a lot of criticism on "charges" following the Whiff report.

I had a charge of £30 made on my account for an accidental overdraft, which was my fault. I phoned my manager at

Barclays (Blackheath) Warley, and, because of my good record, the charge was removed.

Thank you Barclays. Yours faithfully, BILL JAMES, 33 Quarry Lane, Halesowen, West Midlands.

BANKS

Bank	Rate	Term	Min. Invest.	Notice	Contact
Ordinary Dep A/c	0.38	0.38	0.30	1,000	7 day
Fixed Term Deposits					
Barclays	4.50	3.47	2.75	25,000-50,000	1 mth 071-628 1557
Current A/c	3.87	2.50	2.50	10,000-50,000	3 mth 071-628 1557
Lloyds	5.12	3.26	3.07	10,000-40 mth	1 mth Local Branch
Midland	5.12	3.26	3.07	10,000-40 mth	1 mth Local Branch
NatWest	4.75	3.26	2.25	10,000-100,000	3 mth 0742 828555
TSB	4.75	3.26	2.25	10,000-100,000	3 mth 0742 828555
First Direct	4.75	3.26	2.25	10,000-100,000	3 mth 071-228 1000

HIGH INTEREST CHEQUE ACCOUNTS

Bank	Rate	Term	Min. Invest.	Notice	Contact
Barclays	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
First Direct	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
Co-operative	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
Current A/c	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
Midland	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
Abbey National	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
NatWest	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
TSB	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
First Direct	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777

BUILDING SOCIETIES

Bank	Rate	Term	Min. Invest.	Notice	Contact
Barclays	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
First Direct	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
Co-operative	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
Current A/c	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
Midland	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
Abbey National	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
NatWest	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
TSB	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
First Direct	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777

Compiled by Chase de Vere Moneyline - call 071 404 5700 for further details.

NATIONAL SAVINGS

Bank	Rate	Term	Min. Invest.	Notice	Contact
Ordinary A/c	3.25	2.44	1.95	500-10,000	8 day 041-648-4555
Investment A/c	3.25	2.44	1.95	20-450	1 mth 041-648-4555
Income Bond	3.25	2.44	1.95	2,000-50,000	3 mth 0253 789151
First Direct	3.25	2.44	1.95	100-100,000	1 mth 0253 789151
First Direct	3.25	2.44	1.95	100-100,000	1 mth 0253 789151
First Direct	3.25	2.44	1.95	100-100,000	1 mth 0253 789151
First Direct	3.25	2.44	1.95	100-100,000	1 mth 0253 789151
First Direct	3.25	2.44	1.95	100-100,000	1 mth 0253 789151
First Direct	3.25	2.44	1.95	100-100,000	1 mth 0253 789151

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

Bank	Rate	Term	Min. Invest.	Notice	Contact
ABN Life	5.75	5.75	4.50	50,000 min	1 year 071-404 5700
ABN Life	5.75	5.75	4.50	50,000 min	1 year 071-404 5700
ABN Life	5.75	5.75	4.50	50,000 min	1 year 071-404 5700
ABN Life	5.75	5.75	4.50	50,000 min	1 year 071-404 5700
ABN Life	5.75	5.75	4.50	50,000 min	1 year 071-404 5700

RATES

Bank	Rate	Term	Min. Invest.	Notice	Contact
RPI (Oct 94)	2.4%				
Bank Base Rate	5.75%				
Personal Loans	8%				
Credit Card	25-27%				

TESSA

Bank	Rate	Term	Min. Invest.	Notice	Contact
Market Harbor	7.50	23,225.00	50 day loan/loss	25,000	0858 483444
Hindley/Rogley	7.50	23,225.00	50 day loan/loss	25,000	0455 251254
Hindley/Rogley	7.50	23,225.00	50 day loan/loss	25,000	0455 251254
Hindley/Rogley	7.50	23,225.00	50 day loan/loss	25,000	0455 251254
Hindley/Rogley	7.50	23,225.00	50 day loan/loss	25,000	0455 251254

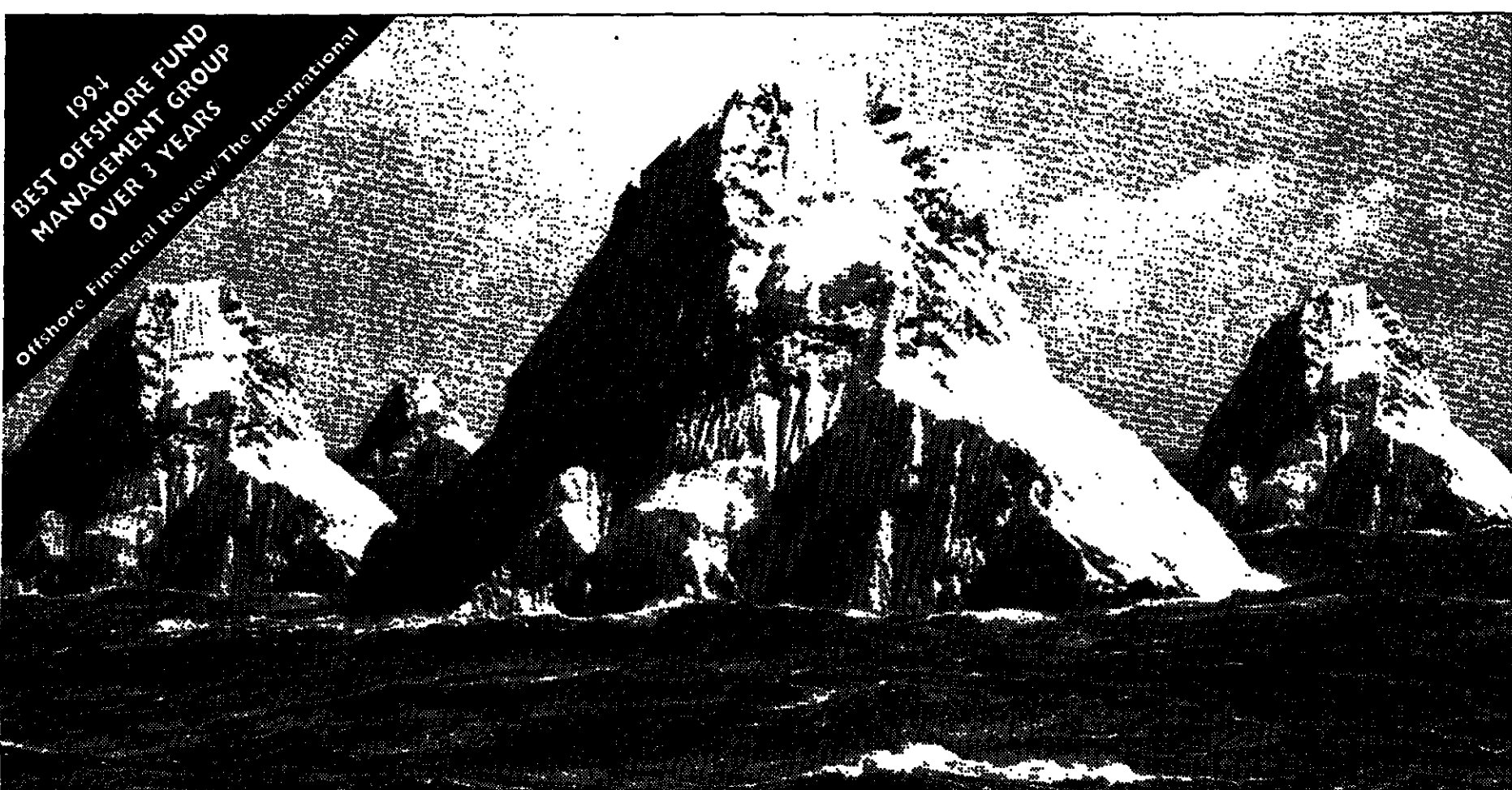
* 1.25% for balances below £500, and 1.75% for balances above £500. Interest is paid on the balance of £100 of less. * Additional holding up to £20,000 for investors in-vesting proceeds of existing managed certificates. * The free "Interest" could prove higher rates for larger sums. * Guaranteed over the life of the plan. * 0.2% net bonus for amounts £20,000+.

Compiled by JOANNA DOWDSE

LEADER

Bank	Rate	Term	Min. Invest.	Notice	Contact
Barclays	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
First Direct	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
Co-operative	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
Current A/c	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
Midland	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
Abbey National	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
NatWest	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
TSB	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777
First Direct	5.50	2.68	2.10	2,000	none 091-442 7777

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PERPETUAL OFFSHORE FUNDS	LAUNCH DATE	% CHANGE SINCE LAUNCH	POSITION IN SECTOR	% CHANGE OVER 5 YEARS
International Growth	25-1-83	+482.7	3 out of 28	+67.4
Emerging Companies	8-4-85	+599.7	1 out of 41	+163.5
Japanese Growth	21-4-84	+736.3	1 out of 27	+152.3
UK Growth	8-1-86	+424.1	2 out of 23	+122.5
Japanese Growth	30-11-91	+56.8	6 out of 95	
European Growth	8-11-86	+123.9	8 out of 24	+30.2
UK Growth	24-10-87	+205.6	1 out of 32	+129.5
Global Bond	7-12-92	+1.1	129 out of 158	
Asian Smaller Markets	8-3-93	+90.3	8 out of 94	

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Your shares will be bought with others so may result in a higher or lower price than if sold alone.

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[illegible]

124	105	105	105	111	387	169	70	179	1	49
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126	126	126	126	126	387	169	70	179	1	49
127	127	127	127	127	387	169	70	179	1	49
128	128	128	128	128	387	169	70	179	1	49
129	129	129	129	129	387	169	70	179	1	49
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167	167	167	167	167	387	169	70	179	1	49
168	168	168	168	168	387	169	70	179	1	49
169	169	169	169	169	387	169	70	179	1	4

[illegible]

Fresh Ascot management will make customer care leading priority

Heralding a new era for royal course

BY RICHARD EVANS
RACING CORRESPONDENT

GOODBYE off-hand, snooty and hide-bound Ascot. Make way for welcoming, entrepreneurial and forward-looking Ascot, where the needs of customers come first.

The dawn of a new era for the royal racecourse emerged in the starkest terms yesterday as the new team chosen to run the world's most famous track set out their stall and confirmed that a much-needed wind of change is already sweeping through its portals.

Douglas Erskine-Crum, head-hunted from the senior

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: ZAJIRA

(1.00 Aintree)

Next best: Shujaa

(3.40 Ascot)

The Times Private Handicapper (Gerald Hubbard) gave six winners at Ascot yesterday, including Over The Pole (3-1) and Mystic Memento (5-2). The accumulative odds were 161 to 1.

ranked of the Army to fill the new post of racecourse director, yesterday showed that the high reputation which has accompanied him into Civvy Street is deserved as he confronted head-on the main criticism aimed at Ascot in recent times.

"For everyone at Ascot our ethos will be to put customers first. Customer care will be leading priority. We will start by reviewing the needs of our key customer groups - established racegoers, potential racegoers, sponsors, owners, trainers, annual members, box holders and non-race-day users."

"This review will form an integral part of our marketing strategy which, with the quality of our management and staff, will provide our foundation for the future."

One of the first effects of the new attitude towards customers could be the scrapping of the annoying search which is made of spectators' bags when they pay to come through the turnstiles. Erskine-Crum acknowledged the "acceptable



Oh So Risky, ridden by Holley, ended a long losing run with a fluent success in the grade two Coopers & Lybrand Ascot Hurdle

criticism" of the practice which aggravates many people.

In addition, the renovation of stands and other buildings is regarded as an "essential" part of Ascot's long-term



Erskine-Crum: capable

plans. "We need to come to certain conclusions about the stands, which were built in the 1960s. They cannot last forever," Erskine-Crum, aged 45, added.

Quality of racing remains crucial and while the Flat programme, headed by the royal meeting, is second to none, increased impetus is being devoted to jumping fixtures.

The first grade one chase, the £50,000 Comet Steeplechase run over 2½ miles, will be staged on February 8, Nick Cheyne, the new clerk of the course, announced.

Two new sponsors, the Mitie Group and Davis Langdon & Everest, are backing jump races next year. Meanwhile, Ascot has agreed in principle a new three-year contract with the BBC for

coverage of its meetings. Non-race-day activities will also be expanded to generate extra revenue which can be ploughed back into racing.

The boost for National Hunt racing at Ascot cannot come soon enough. Not for the first time, yesterday's card, with £59,000 added prize-money, attracted pitifully small fields - just 36 runners. Not that the punters were complaining, as four favourites obliged and the longest-priced winner of the day was 3-1.

The most significant result was Oh So Risky's smooth success in the valuable Coopers & Lybrand Ascot Hurdle, his first jumping victory for 3½ years. Twice a runner-up in the Champion Hurdle, he was produced perfectly by Paul Holley to take up the

running at the last flight and quickly scooted away from Top Spin.

David Elsworth, the trainer of the talented but somewhat quirky seven-year-old, now faces a predicament. He would love to send Oh So Risky novice chasing having seen him school so well over fences at home, but knows there are far more valuable races over the smaller obstacles which can be won.

With Alours, now as short as 10-1 second favourite for the hurdlers' crown, in the wings, Elsworth can afford to be patient. A dual campaign, with novice chases after Christmas followed by a crack at the Champion Hurdle, for which he is a best-priced 20-1 with Ladbrokes, is a distinct possibility.

Josh Gifford's tremendous

run continued as Over The Pole and Run Up The Flag brought his tally during the past week to nine victories. The latter, a very easy winner of the Punch Bowl Amateur Riders' Chase, could turn out quickly at Taunton next Thursday for a £10,000 race.

Aside from today's televised races, there are some interesting betting opportunities, headed by Brocton Bay (2.50) at Market Rasen who should oblige for the in-form Mary Reveley after a promising seasonal debut over course and distance two weeks ago.

At Ascot, Lusty Light (2.30) and Sybilina (3.05) can oblige at Crayke, but there may be some each-way value to be had with Treasure Again (1.55), who shaped promisingly behind Shaped Arithmetic at Newbury.

FORM FOCUS

2.10 JOHN PARRETT MEMORIAL HANDICAP CHASE (Grade 3, £3,000; 2m 110yds) (11 runners)
1. 2245-43 YOUNG SHAGGY 22 (D.F.B.S.) (Sally Rogers) 10-11-10 J.A. McCarthy (5) 22
2. 2202-22 CLAY COURTY 17 (D.F.B.S.) (Miles in Mind) M. Hammond 9-11-10 J.A. McCarthy (5) 22
3. 2210-20 KINGS GRENAD 14 (D.F.B.S.) (Miles in Mind) M. Hammond 9-11-10 J.A. McCarthy (5) 22
4. 3021-12 WHATE'S IN (ORBIT 25) (D.F.B.S.) (C.A. Palmer) P. Roberts 9-10-10 C. Maude 94
5. 5033-03 ASSAULT 15 (W.C.D.F.) (Judy Hume) Mrs S. Broome 10-10-10 C. Maude 94

Long Hurdle: Assaunt 8-2

BETTING: 7-4 Young Shaggy, 2-1 Clay Court, 4-1 Kings Grenad, 5-2 What's In Orbit, 20-1 Assaunt

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Saturday portrait: Shaun Edwards by Simon Barnes

Hanley's hard man steels himself for return to front line

Beaten. But, faster than thought, the refusal to be beaten. Thus Michael Schumacher drove Damon Hill off the track and was praised for his ruthlessness; thus Shaun Edwards stuck out an arm and felled Bradley Clyde, of Australia.

England captain sent off at Wembley. Condemnation ranged from the just to the ludicrously over the top, northern peasants letting the whole damn side down, that sort of thing.

The point is that Edwards is not a dirty player. He is very hard and very tough, but these are not useful attributes in singling out one rugby league player from another. He is to be defined not by illegal tackles, but by skills, vision and competitive dementia. "He reminds me of me," Ellery Hanley, the Great Britain coach, said. If Hanley seeks a single man to summarise his belief in the need to "put your body on the line", the phrase that is Hanley's personal leitmotif, it is Edwards.

Edwards returns as captain of the Great Britain team tomorrow, to take on Australia in the decisive international in Leeds. "Completely focused. A winner. He breathes confidence into players," Hanley said. Then, with extra warmth: "Class bloke." More than colleagues, more than friends, they have been, as Hanley would say, "in battle together".

Hanley's respect, let alone Hanley's uncritical respect, is not a thing won lightly. The load Edwards must bear in consequence is colossal: the burden of his sending-off, the fact that he was suspended for the second game, which his side lost, and the crushing responsibility of the fact that the strategy for the game revolves around him: his vision, his hands, his boot.

The way he has handled his three-match suspension from competitive rugby league sums him up: hard running, naturally hard training, inevitably. "And I've been boxing. Sparring with Va'iga Tuigamala."

It is subtly fitting that Edwards should spend his suspension trying to knock merry hell out of a man twice his size: "Running,

you don't get used to taking knocks. So it's been very good." Edwards is 12 stone and looks lighter. The weight is all in wiry, bouncy muscle. He plays as scrum half, but positions in rugby league do not have the formalised meaning they have in the other oval-ball code. Suffice to say that in a game of total rugby, Edwards is the pivot.

People talk about the quality of "soft hands" in wicketkeepers, goalkeepers, scrum halves: the ability to give with the ball, to absorb its pace despite the competitive tensions that make muscles stiff and unyielding. It is from softness, not hardness, that control will come. Nobody talks about "soft feet". But if we can forget the nonsensical side of this notion, the phrase describes Edwards's great-

'It's good not to be too relaxed. I've tried being laid-back. I'm better when nervous'

est skill. Kicking an oval ball from hand is one of sports more mysterious feats of coordination. The tensions of playing rugby ungrudgingly supply vast amounts of adrenalin and muscular rigidity: the almighty wallop is easy enough.

But to put up a game-long series of controlled chips, nudges, grubbers, skidders and sliders, and to do so on the run, with two or three giants seeking to disembowel you as you do so: to control a weirdly shaped ball with a hurried, booted foot: this is a different matter. It seems likely that the Great Britain plan tomorrow will centre on Edwards and this extraordinary skill. Is it the biggest game of your life?

"Yes." How do you feel? "Edgy. Nervous." Is that a problem? "It's good not to be too relaxed. I've tried being laid-back. It's not

me. I'm better when I'm nervous. It's a matter of handling it."

Do you feel you owe people something after the sending-off at Wembley?

"I owe me own team. Don't owe anyone else."

At the end of this brief media grilling, he apologised. "Sorry me answers weren't very good."

This odd apology, one almost unprecedented in sport, betrays more nervousness: certainly not humility. For this is a man whose playing style is characterised by blazing, rather uncomfortable intensity. He is planning to play the game of his life tomorrow.

He is a restless man, a man of tensions as well as a man of professionally strong will. Like Hanley, he is an obsessive: like Hanley, a man committed to team and to victory, not to self and to personal glory.

He is Wigan through and through — born there, bred there, signed for the club at 17. To the great player, Wigan brings victory after victory, yet never leaves his soul sad. There is always the appetite for just one more crushing win. Edwards signed for Wigan on breakfast television in 1983 on his seventeenth birthday: the fee, £35,000, was a world record for a schoolboy signing.

Before that, he had captained England under-16s at both rugby union and league within four days. But the dilettante game was never going to dominate Edwards's attention. His father was also a professional rugby league player, and that fact has dominated the life of the son. Jackie Edwards, scrum half for Warrington, suffered a spinal injury at 24. He never played again. Or worked again.

The rewards of the son have been visited on the father. Shaun says that the greatest achievement of his life is buying his parents a nice house. There is a tendency for football players to become young fogies: to become comfortable establishment men at the drop of a signing-on fee. Rugby league is a game of different traditions, and Edwards is faithful to them. He has been described as an old-fashioned, God-fearing socialist.



John Major visited the Wigan dressing-room after a Challenge Cup win: "It meant nothing. I just thought about all the hospitals he has closed."

In his playing style, Edwards is the antithesis of flash. He is one for all, all for one, but with the nerve to take responsibility for the team at the decisive moment. Unexpectedly, at least, to those who only see him with a ball in his hands, he has taste for gaudy night-life. Clubs and endless hours of dance-

ing bring him joy and relief. It is a second world, another that absorbs him utterly: his girlfriend, a singer, a black woman for what that matters, inhabits the same world. It is a world, Edwards says, that keeps him from obsession with rugby and with victory.

The irony of the stiff-arm tackle business has been the fact that Edwards, the perceived national disgrace, was and is one of the most respected players in rugby league. Some see his signing as the

turning point for Wigan. Edwards did not join a club accustomed, as it is now, to unbroken success.

Wigan's eternal rival, St Helens, were the more likely team when Edwards turned professional. Wigan were regarded, like Newcastle in football a few years back, as one of the eternal sleeping giants of the game. The addition of Edwards was a decisive, if not the decisive move, in the progression of Wigan from slumberer to all-conquering force.

Edwards is a man who finds release of his many tensions and pressures in the turmoil of rugby or in the unthinking 'dim' of the dance. But the very notion of pressure is something he will reject any time you suggest such a thing. He has no pressures at all, he says. Pressure is three kids and on the dole. Pressure is the mortgage and the shadow of the repo man.

Tell that to the butterflies tomorrow. No doubt he will.

Ghosts of missed opportunities poised to haunt hapless Britain

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

THE fact that Great Britain have knocked on the door four times since last overturning Australia in a rugby league series, in 1970, and come away disappointed is a measure of Britain's task at Elland Road tomorrow.

The ghosts of too many missed chances haunt them. The best opportunity this series came and went at Old Trafford in time-honoured fashion. Between defeats in third and deciding matches at Sydney, in 1974, and Brisbane two years ago, Leeds has twice been the scene of wrecked ambitions, at Headingley in 1978 and Elland Road on the 1990 Australia tour.

By instinct, the Kangaroos are never more menacing than when confronted by the sudden-death scenario and Britain rank a distant second favourite. There again, where was logic when Michael Moore, the world heavy-weight boxing champion, was sent to the canvas by George Foreman? The odds on Britain are roughly the same that Foreman overhauled.

"Fat chance!" screamed a headline in the *Rugby League* yesterday. Of a straw poll of eight first division coaches only Andy Goodway, of Oldham, backed Britain. It was a case, he admitted, of heart ruling head. With the Ashes planned as a retirement gift for Mal Meninga, heart also says Australia.

For Britain to lose 2-1 for a fourth consecutive series would be no disgrace, however frustrating, but any re-

ELLAND ROAD TEAMS

GREAT BRITAIN	AUSTRALIA
G Connolly (Wigan)	1 B Mullins (Canberra)
J Robinson (Wigan)	2 A Ettingshausen (Cronulla)
A Hunt (St Helens)	3 M Meninga (Canberra)
P Newlove (Bradford)	4 S Renouf (Brisbane)
M O'Flaherty (Wigan)	5 R Wistart (Ipswich)
P Clarke (Wigan)	6 L Daley (Canberra)
S Edwards (Wigan)	7 R Stuart (Canberra)
K Harrison (Hull)	8 G Lazarus (Brisbane)
I Jackson (Sheffield)	9 S Walters (Canberra)
P McDermott (Wigan)	10 I Roberts (Manly)
D Betts (Wigan)	11 D Play (Canterbury)
C Joynt (St Helens)	12 B Clyde (Canberra)
A Farrell (Wigan)	13 B Fittler (Penrith)

* denotes captain

Referee: W Hamman (Australia)

SUBSTITUTES: 14 B Goulding (St Helens), 15 D Powell (Sheffield), 16 G Schofield (Leeds), 17 S Nickle (St Helens).

peat of the 30-point margin of defeat at Old Trafford would add bricks and mortar on the foundations of suspicion that the Kangaroos have taken yet another quantum leap.

Ellery Hanley, the Britain coach, has had no need to cultivate the underdog label this time. Psychological games played a part in Australia's downfall in the first John Smith's international at Wembley, but so irresistible is the tactic has become redundant. It is the scent of the kill that fills Australian nostrils. As anxious as Hanley is to shore up the defence and avoid the avalanche of two weeks ago, more of a gamble must be

taken sooner on the wings. O'Flaherty and Robinson, making more than just peripheral contributions to the game. Not that mistakes can be tolerated given Australia's loose-like feeding on errors.

Hanley has taken one calculated risk already in moving Phil Clarke to stand-off half. This is designed to strengthen Britain's midfield defence. If achieved, Hanley could then drop Clarke back into the pack and introduce Garry Schofield (a 46th cap would equal Mick Sullivan's Great Britain record) to create the openings for the back line, which came too late at Old Trafford.

There will be an onus on

Paul Newlove to fulfil his wonderful potential.

In training sessions this week, it was plain that the tactical kicking of Shaun Edwards will play an important part, especially the chip kicks over the Australian line that have wreaked havoc and reaped fine rewards in the past.

Edwards, back as captain, recognised that he could not afford to kick anywhere near Brett Mullins — give the full back an inch and he'll take 99 yards — while his initial concern will be to shut down the elusive Ricky Stuart, around whom much of the Australia effort revolves — provided that Edwards can get near him.

Stuart's play is the quick release, usually long, that invariably splits a defence. His skill provided the key to winning the second international. It produced a dramatic fusion of Australia's expansive game — the type of game that Britain can expect again, faced with the same starting line-up. As much as losing the rapier thrust of Jonathan Davies was a blow, the absent bludgeon of Kelvin Skerrett deprives Britain of robust experience in the front row that has placed an enormous burden on Barrie McDermott.

Although Martina Navratilova failed to triumph at her last stand in New York this week, it would be a surprise were Meninga not to take his final leave of England with the Ashes trophy. Canberra might even fulfil his jolly promise of a statue straddling the Sydney highway.

practs were having on rugby union. "I don't think we can sit back and allow our top players to be picked off one after the other," Mains said. "League made their intentions very clear a few weeks ago when they lifted the salary cap ... Now either we lie down and let them pick off our best players or we counter-attack."

The drain of talent is expected to continue after rugby union's World Cup in South Africa next summer. Players are likely to be courted by the new competition launched in France by Jacques Fouroux, as well as by Australian and British rugby league clubs.

World Cup demands give youth its chance

BY SYDNEY FRANKIN

OLD Loughtonians need only a draw at home tomorrow against Hounslow to finish on top of Pool C in the Hockey League Cup and to be certain of a place in the final stages, to be played on their premises at Chigwell on December 4.

With Nick Thompson and Halls on World Cup duty with England in Australia, Old Loughtonians, like most other clubs, are calling on younger players to fill the gaps with Cooper among the forwards and Reynolds in midfield. Morrison, Allen, Crymble and Loftus hold strategic positions in midfield.

Hounslow, with the burden of having to win, will be without the Welsh international, Rees, who is unavailable in addition to Potter, Crutchley and Hazlett, who are on World Cup duty. Hankins and Viridi have proved to be suitable replacements in midfield.

The mist over Pool B has not cleared with both Teddington and Surbiton fighting for survival. Teddington, already deprived of the World Cup players, Laslett, McGuire and Nicklin, have also lost their captain, Bilson, and French for the weekend. As an experiment Teddington are moving Wallis from deep defence to centre half and they are also calling on two young forwards, Wyles, 14, and Weissman, 17, Way and Moore will be in defence.

Havant, who beat Firebrands 4-2 and drew 1-1 with Slough, are also trying younger players in key positions for their home match against Trojans in Pool D, with Bartlett and Taylor positioned as full backs and Steve Baker and Cleffe in midfield. In attack, Farnison, Giles and Avery are all scorers of high potential.

Harleston Magpies, having settled into a solid pattern in defence, will attempt to halt the progress of St Albans, the second-division leaders, who are three points clear, a 3-3 draw with St Albans in a pre-season match has given the Harleston side much hope.

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Raw talent overcomes sport's rejection slips

SIMON BARNES
On Saturday

THERE are few things in life that give one quite the same amount of smug satisfaction as to hear of the rejections of the great. The latest in a very long line of these comes in *Arlott: The Official Biography*, by David Rayner Allen.

Arlott's first cricket commentary, given in 1946, was brutally summed up by his producer: "An interesting mind, but a vulgar voice." And, of course, he was never going to get anywhere with a vulgar voice: one that was to become the very voice of summer.

School reports are often the happiest hunting ground for such intemperate rejections. Gary Lineker's famous report read (I quote from memory): "Must devote less time to sport if he wants to get on in life."

Others, non-sporting, concern screen tests. Fred Astaire:

I still want to know what Bottom's going to do when he grows up.



"Balding. Can't act, can't sing. Can dance a little." Clark Gable: "Ears too big."

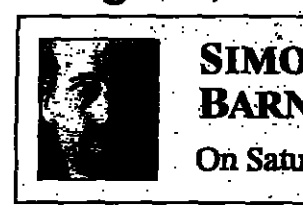
Finally, Ian Botham, in his latest *oeuvre* not inaptly entitled *Botham*, reports the following conversation with his career manager: "Morning, Ian. What thoughts have you had since we last met?"

"Nothing new. I still want to play sport."

"Fine. Everyone wants to play sport. But what are you really going to do?" A question that only now becomes pertinent.

Spent force

Congratulations from this space to Kuwait for their making of football history. In a recent international tournament final, they dropped nine



first-team players in one fell swoop for the crime of ... going shopping.

The match in question was the Gulf Cup Final against Saudi Arabia. One of the dropped players, Nasr al-Sowhi, said: "The team management should have given us a full day to do our shopping, like the other Gulf teams. They gave us three hours." Local newspapers said the players did more than shop, and accused them outright of "immorality". The team manager, Abdul Hameed Mohamed, said: "We are not accusing them of immorality because we do not have proof. But we have proof that they violated the delegation's regulations." Kuwait lost 2-0.

☐ *Is this the finest reason of all time for not playing rugby? Clive Martin, full back with Iybridge in Devon, failed to turn out against mighty Brighthelm Reserves because he had got tickets to go to Birmingham NEC to see Barry Manilow.*

Base language

This column is delighted to announce that Bill Clinton, the well-known president of the United States, has acted decisively in the most difficult and important area of action that his country can come up with: I refer, of course, to the baseball strike.

Clinton has sent out one of his top men, a fellow named Bill Usary. Usary marches with a mandate that states very clearly that Americans must have baseball next season, or the state totters. Usary, storming into the fray with presidential clout, has been wielding the hammer of invective: "If you have had a strike since August 12, both sides, have proved they know how to do that. Now you have to prove that you can have an agreement. The time has come to get one."

The technique, basically one of clog-dancing through the industrial procedure, has already caused the owners, the billionaires, to back off their demands for a salary cap. Now it needs the players, the mere millionaires, to complete the rapprochement. After all, the presidents' reputation hangs in the balance.

Up the wall

Napoli football club is having trouble with the *Portuguese*, which in this case is an Italian term for those who get into an event free, either by scaling the wall or by talking their way through at the gate. It is estimated that the club loses around £240,000 a game. At least 3,000 *Portuguese* get in to every match. The figure was as high as 8,000 in a recent Uefa Cup match against the Portuguese side, Boavista.

The problem is the wall is self. It was lowered in order to make pretty pictures during the 1990 World Cup. It represents a little obstacle to a *Portuguese* of spirit. There is a vigilante group, the Anti-Scalers, whose task is to stop wall-climbing, but they are taking heavy casualties, frequently set on and beaten up. A spokesman said, lugubriously: "Our men are active but impotent."

Six of the best

Many thanks to those who have already responded to this column's plea for suggestions for the magic numbers of sport. I already have some wonderfully fragrant figures, the senders of which will be rewarded with bottles of Bell's eight-year-old whisky. More examples: 6 for Torvill and Dean, 6 for Garry Sobers, and for Bobby Moore, well, how about 6? This column awaits more and beautiful suggestions, the whole lot to be celebrated together at Christmas in an organic binge of sporting numerology.

New managers start daunting tasks

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

ALAN Sugar and Peter Ellis will be looking more than usual in their directors' box seats today. For Sugar, chairman of Tottenham Hotspur, and Ellis, chairman of Queens Park Rangers, it is a day of trepidation. As their clubs make new starts, with new managers, will the boardroom leaders be proved shrewd or stupid in their appointments?

Sugar has put his faith in Gerry Francis, who begins his tenure against Aston Villa at White Hart Lane, while Ellis, and Richard Thompson, who owns Rangers, have plumped for Ray Wilkins, whose return to Loftus Road — after the briefest of playing spells at Crystal Palace — is marked by the visit of Leeds United. Though neither manager will be expected to produce instantly eye-catching displays, from teams that lie in the bottom half of the

FA Carling Premiership table, signs of improvement will be relished.

Francis, formerly of Rangers, has by far the bigger challenge, for north London always harbours greater hopes than west London. Though he has better talent at his disposal — Jürgen Klinsmann, Ili Durić, Nicky Barmby et al — it only heightens the expectation. Transforming Tottenham from a rampant attacking force, with suicidal defensive tendencies, into a more compact unit will not be easy. Weeding out the chaff from a 44-strong professional squad will take time.

"I've been told there is no money," Francis said. "If I want to raise finance, I'll have to generate it myself from selling. Until then, I must work with the players I have. We've a lot of players in some positions and not many in other areas. That is something I will have to look at."

The important thing is to start

winning. Take away the six points we are to be deducted and we are fifth from bottom. We have to start playing and defending as a team."

Darren Anderson, the Tottenham and England winger, is available again after a six-week absence because of a groin injury. However, Dumitrescu and Justin Edinburgh are ruled out through suspension and Erik Thorstvedt, the goalkeeper, is sidelined with back problems.

Villa, having collected only one point from a possible 21, are still behind Tottenham and Rangers in the managerial stakes. They do not have one. Since the dismissal of Ron Atkinson nine days ago, Doug Ellis, the Villa chairman, has tried, and failed, to find a replacement. David Pleat, initially courted by Tottenham, yesterday ruled himself out after Luton Town refused Ellis permission to approach him. Jim Barron stays as caretaker manager for the moment

and Ellis will not pursue his interest in Brian Little, the manager of Leicester City, while Leicester talk of compensation of £1.5 million.

Should Wilkins, who will combine playing and managing at Loftus Road, need early assistance, he will now be able to call on Frank Stapleton, his former team-mate at Manchester United. Stapleton, the former Arsenal and Ireland forward and Bradford City manager, joined Rangers yesterday as reserve team coach. However, Les Ferdinand will miss the game against Leeds after aggravating a toe injury while training with the England squad in midweek.

Joe Royle, another new manager, has to wait until Monday for his bow at the Everton helm. It is a difficult introduction, too, with his bottom-of-the-table side playing Liverpool at Goodison Park. Graeme Sharp, who succeeded Royle as manager of

Oldham Athletic, opens his collar-and-tie career with an Endsleigh Insurance League first division trip to West Bromwich Albion.

Few managers could be safer than Alex Ferguson, at Manchester United, but the Premiership champions' unblemished league record at Old Trafford this season will be under threat from a revitalised Crystal Palace this afternoon. Palace have won their last five matches and have one of the best away league records in the country — only one defeat since March. United are without Keane, Bruce, Sharpe, Parker and Giggs.

Brian Horton, manager of Manchester City, beaten 5-0 by United in their last outing, has made four changes to the back five that collapsed against their Mancunian rivals for the game against Leicester. "It is a test for us," Horton said. "I'm looking for a good response from the players."



Francis will trim staff

Legends of bygone age stand tall in scoring hierarchy

By ROB HUGHES, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

DAVID Platt's latest goal at Wembley, and Gary Lineker's imminent retirement in Japan, are a reminder that while football is a team game it is the individual goalscorers who leave an imprint on its history.

How remarkable it is that Platt, an indolent player in midfield, should rank higher in the all-time statistics of England goalscorers than Stan Mortensen, Tommy Lawton and Kevin Keegan. "Just getting my name up there among the legends is very pleasing," the England captain said after heading his way to ninth in the record books on Wednesday with the goal that beat Nigeria.

He is there in a chart that, for consistent England goalscorers, shows a knight of the realm, Sir Bobby Charlton, at the top, followed by a brace of pure poachers, Lineker and Jimmy Greaves, and then the old Lion of Vienna, Nat Lofthouse, a centre forward in all that that description implies.

But the counting has been going on before any of them ever came to the fore. If one was to take a percentage of goals scored against games played, Vivian Woodward and

Steve Bloomer, goalscorers around the turn of the century, would be No 1 and No 2 in English heritage.

They performed, of course, in a different era, and from Woodward, who never played for money, to Lineker, who is one of the sport's millionaires, the game has gone through interminable change in style of dress, tactics and in the pure physical demands on the performers.

The Germans seemed to

'Ungentlemanly to rattle in so many against a visiting rabble'

have a good idea of the game, but being imperfectly shod could not keep their feet, "thus did one scribe of the day analyse a performance of an England team which scored a dozen goals in London, a team which included Bloomer."

The implication was that goalscoring was easy, that it was quite ungentlemanly to rattle in so many goals against

so ill-prepared a visiting rabble.

Times changed. Adidas came to the fore, and Gerd Müller, with 68 goals in 62 internationals, became the incomparable model of international scoring consistency.

But the cameo from the reporter emphasised that Bloomer, the accumulator of 352 League goals playing for Derby County and Middlesbrough, was indeed a creature of a bygone era, albeit a predator, just the same as the modern players.

It is still astonishing, however, that Platt, like Bryan Robson before him, should be able to perform the role of captain of midfield industry yet, through stealth, extreme fitness and immaculate timing, pop up to score goals so regularly that they equal Geoff Hurst and have outscored many of the specialist strikers throughout history.

The era in which a man has played, the strength of the opposition, the tactical nuances of the day, would all have to be accounted for in any attempt to make comparisons.

Some of the tenets of history will always apply, however. It was Bloomer who left behind the maxims "a goalscorer should let fly as soon as he sees the goal" and "any shot that scores is a good shot."

And it would have been quite unthinkable in the time of Bloomer and Woodward to go to Wembley and there to be outplayed for half-an-hour by Romanians or Nigerians. The goals of Woodward and Bloomer — with the exception of the first German visit — came almost exclusively in the Home International championships.

Today, when Platt accumulates neither his goals nor his wealth in the country, it is altogether a new ball-game chasing the old statistics.

"I'm just about halfway there," he observed in relation to Charlton's record. "But I've got to hit 100 caps and keep the same scoring ratio going." If he gets there, he will be in his mid-30s, history itself — players who run like Platt usually burn out.

Lineker welcomes twilight's last gleaming

Oliver Holt talks to the England goalscorer whose career comes to an end in Japan today

The frenetic neon signs above the Game City amusement arcade blink ever faster in Nagoya's gathering gloom. A few doers wearing face masks attend to the day's final customers as dusk settles and hundreds of commuters disappear down the steps to the subway. This city, two hours west of Tokyo by Bullet Train, is Gary Lineker's twilight world.

Lineker has not raged against the dying of his light, accepting footballing mortality with his customary grace and intelligence, relishing the prospect of fresh challenges. But the end of a career is a shadowy place, wreathed in memories, sometimes in regrets. For him, it all comes to an end today.

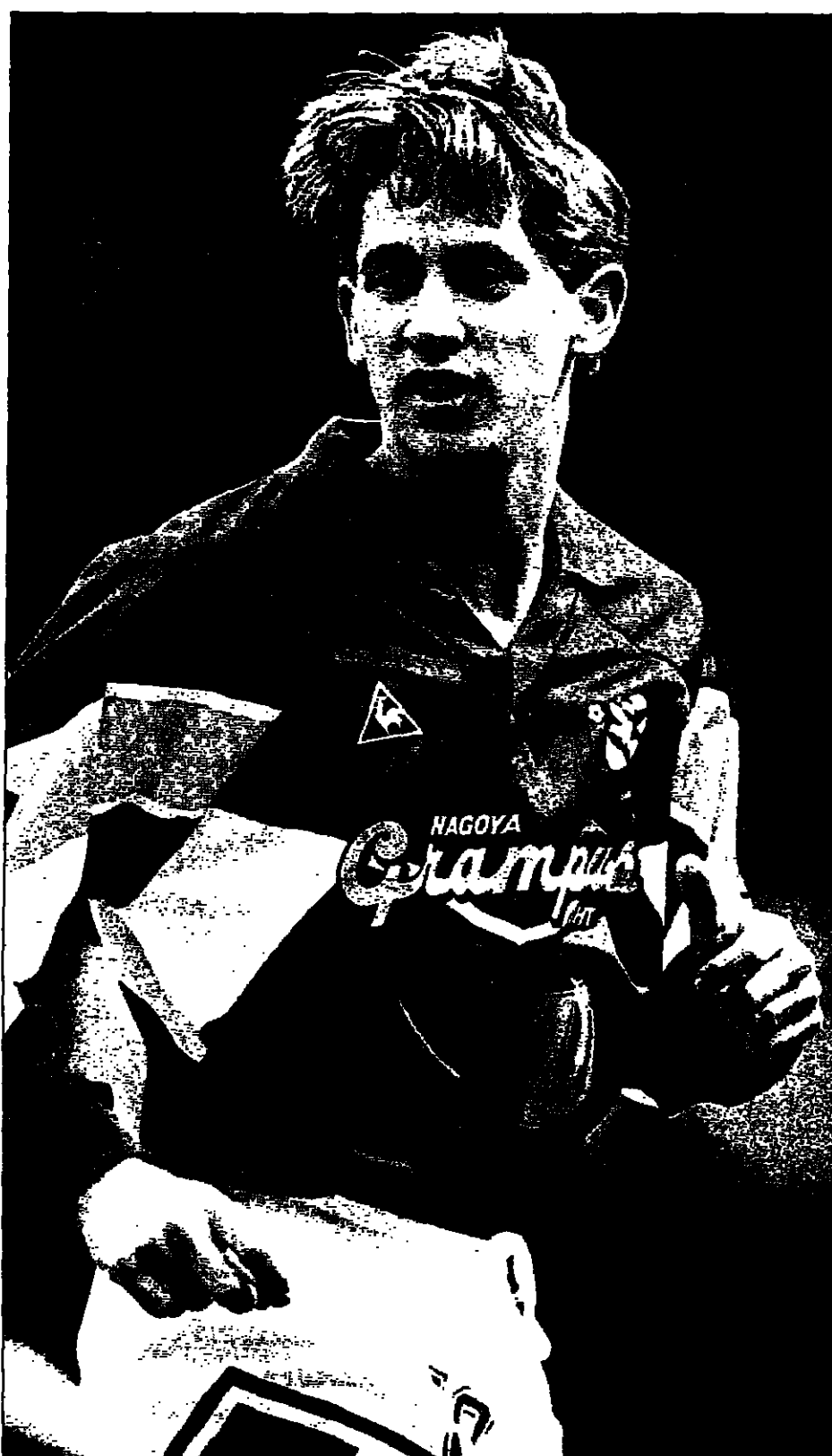
He has lived with his wife, Michelle, and their two infant sons, in a plush two-bedroom apartment round the corner from Game City for the past 18 months, confined by a series of injuries to a role of frequent spectator as his team, Grampus Eight, struggled vainly to make an impact in the nascent Japanese J-League.

Lineker has played only 17 games and scored four goals in the two seasons since he decided to leave Tottenham Hotspur and finish his playing days in Japan. His presence here has been a cornerstone of the explosion of interest in the sport, but he is a pale imitation of the player he used to be.

Even his wish to finish with a flourish did not go to plan. Three weeks ago, he sustained a hairline fracture of a rib in a match against Bel Mare, of Hiratsuka, and has missed the last five games. He is not properly fit for his farewell against Hiroshima today, but he is determined to play.

After that, his goals are clear: a new career in the media as analyst, radio presenter and columnist and possibly a role in football administration. Until that phase begins in earnest early next year, though, he is stuck in a never-ending land of injury and frustration.

"I want to get this finished now," Lineker said. "It is a bit like being in limbo. We have not got a very good team, we



Lineker has played 17 times for Grampus Eight but scored only four times

are near the bottom of the table and I would just like to get out and play. But I am getting hit all the time and it never used to be like that.

"I am getting muscle injuries because my pace is not there any more. I used to be able to skip away from chal-

lenges but now I am getting involved in clashes that I would have escaped before. The first yards of pace have gone and I have just had one injury after another.

"I am glad they did not see me like this in England and I am a bit embarrassed about

what has happened to me. But I have no regrets about coming out here. It was always going to be a bit like missionary work. One phase of my career finished when I left Tottenham, and my final match at Old Trafford is something I will never forget.

The whole stadium stood up and sang my name. That was the only time I ever had a lump in my throat playing football."

Despite his sporadic appearances, the Japanese supporters have not turned on Lineker. Zico aside, he was the first foreign star to commit himself to the J-League, and he is fêted wherever he goes. Most matches in the ten-team league are a sell-out and the supporters are not the critical, fickle beings that their English counterparts are.

"A lot of them are young girls," Lineker said. "They cheer just as much if you are losing 4-0 as when you are winning. I used to win when I first came here if I hit a bad pass, waiting for the groans, but they never came. It is very different to England."

'I am glad they did not see me like this in England'

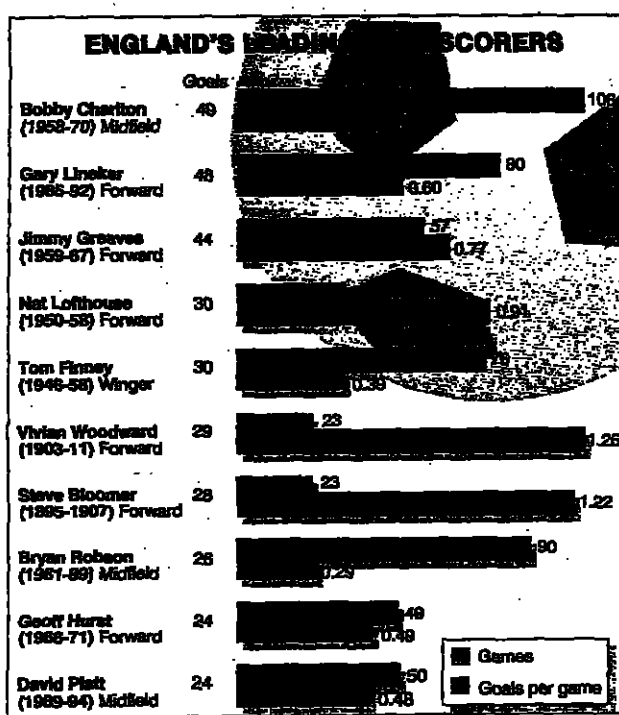
and the singing is higher pitched. It makes a nice change.

"They screen four or five live games a week on the television here, which is too much because they are not of sufficient quality to stand up to that exposure yet."

In his enforced absence from the game, Lineker has taken to golf, practising in the driving ranges whose tall, green nets are a feature of every town. But as the end nears and Grampus Eight make arrangements for a farewell presentation, wishfulness creeps into Lineker's thoughts.

"The buzz I got out of the game was scoring," he said. "I can't imagine anything else that could come near it. That is irreplaceable and I do not expect to experience it again. I don't think you'll ever see me playing again because I would need various injections to dull the pain in my foot and basically that's not healthy. There might be the very occasional testimonial but that will just be for odd favours to mates."

"No other sport could give you that magical feeling that football gives me. Perhaps you could get that buzz from managing but I have never fancied that. Still, Kevin Keegan said that and look where he is. Never say never."



Joubert angling for success

David Hands on the attacking full back who has emerged as head of South Africa's cast

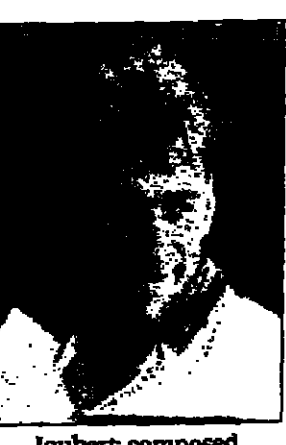
IMAGINE, if you will, the South Africa full back up to his knees in a Scottish river, indulging his love of fishing, a man at peace with the world. Turn the page to Murrayfield today and 60,000 rugby enthusiasts willing Andre Joubert to fail, to miss his kicks at goal or the tackle which might help Scotland to reverse the losing trend of the last year.

To be a fisherman, even a deep-sea angler, which is Joubert's primary enjoyment in the piscatorial world, is to be a philosopher. Hence Joubert's ability to reconcile triumph and disaster, and his emergence on South Africa's tour of Wales and Scotland as one of the key players in a team still scrambling to find its feet, both in unfamiliar British conditions and in world status.

From the moment that he took the field for the game against Cardiff which opened the tour, Joubert has shown that enduring quality of the class sportsman — he has time. Where others have been flustered, he has shown a mature understanding of the game and, in the process, has emerged from the pack of players to have occupied the No 15 jersey since South Africa's return to international competition two years ago. Never were his virtues more

apparent than on the stormy night at Neath when, amid a welter of blows and counterblows, he appeared an island of tranquillity when he replaced Chris Badenhorst. The ability to keep his head when all around were losing theirs was vital as the South Africans squeaked out a 16-13 win from a fixture they might easily have lost.

Joubert might have drifted within the game, as he was once labelled with the sometimes unhappy tag of sevens specialist, particularly willing to play Barbarian-style rugby.



Joubert composed

Indeed, it was as full back for the Barbarians that he played at Murrayfield three years ago, holding the full Scotland XV to a 16-16 draw. "It was," he remembers drily, conscious of the miserable weather which has attended so many tour games here, "a nice day."

He might even have been omitted from the tour party altogether. Although he toured New Zealand during the summer, what he believes to have been a misunderstanding with Kitch Christie led to him being omitted from the new coach's first training squad. Any distance was soon closed and a couple of days later he was restored.

The inner strength of the Natal full back became apparent when he recovered from a year and a half of injury, just at the time when South Africa were seeking to make the best of impressions on the world stage. Already acknowledged as a potent attacking force in 93 games for the Orange Free State, where he succeeded Gysie Pienaar — now assistant coach to the national side as full back, the first of nine caps came as a replacement in

1989 before he returned to his native Natal.

He played for the World XV which gathered in New Zealand early in 1992 but a damaged cruciate ligament, followed by a torn adductor muscle, left him stranded as Theo van Rensburg and Hugh Rees-Edwards duelled at full back. Not until van Rensburg was forced out of the 1993 tour to Australia did Joubert's fortune change. "When you have been at the top, then lose it, you don't want that to happen again and I worked really hard to get back," Joubert, a financial consultant for a Durban-based bank, said.

The proof of the pudding... Joubert, now 30, has had his busiest but most productive year. "My confidence is high and I really think I am playing as well as I ever have." In addition, he shoulders the goalkeeping responsibilities with a style completely removed from the purposeful approach of Grant Fox or Neil Jenkins: place the ball, a few steps back and the grooved, left-footed swing which has brought 36 points in five appearances on tour. As another goalkeeping full back, Jonathan Webb, once said, "I visualise the successful kick at goal like an angler casting his line." The metaphor will do for Joubert.

Division of spoils helps England

By DAVID HANDS

IF PREPARATION means anything then the North and London, the teams that dominated the early years of the competition, should start the CIS divisional championship as favourites at Otley and Bristol today; a championship which, with appropriate adaptation, seems to have found something like its right level.

Over the last decade it has been much maligned and, more recently, superseded by the growing number of rungs on the England ladder — under-21, emerging players, B or A team. Yet it continues as a valid breeding ground, not only for players, but coaches, referees and selectors. The experience, for example, of the North in Namibia and South Africa during the summer, or London in Zimbabwe, gives a validity to the whole concept that its critics will not allow.

It is also a tournament in which experimentation can be encouraged without fear of dents to the national reputation. Thus the offer by Derek Eves to revert to his schoolboy position of hooker in the hope of furthering his international ambitions is one that should be taken seriously, especially in an area where England are digging deep for the next generation.

Eves, the Bristol flanker recalled by the South-West against London for the first defence of their divisional title at Bristol when Steve Ojomoh declared himself unavailable, said: "If I had positive vibes from the selectors about this then I would definitely think about it. I'm not sure what our Bristol hooker, Mark Regan, would think about it though — he's already involved at England squad level."

Injury has not helped the selectors: neither of the Northampton half backs, Paul Grayson and Matt Dawson, is fit enough to play for, respectively, the North or the Midlands at Otley. The Midlands have also lost Jez Harris, their stand-off, but on the credit side Damian Hopkin is prepared to

play wing for London, which leaves them able to select Nick Greenstock at centre in a back division marshalled by the experienced Steve Bates.

The county championship, too, moves into gear in the south of the country: Yorkshire, the holders, made heavy weather of beating Durham 13-5 last Tuesday but Cornwall, always popular favourites, are well prepared for their clash with Middlesex at Redruth today.

Two clubs who have slipped from grace in the Heineken League, Swansea and Neath, meet at St Helen's. Neath have won only three league games this season and though Swansea lead the chasing pack four points adrift of Cardiff, the shadow of the South African

defeat still hangs heavily over them.

Cardiff take on Newbridge at the Arms Park, while Pontypriid, the other team on form and potentially Cardiff's most serious challengers, miss out on today's action as they prepare for the game on Tuesday against the South Africans.

Although without Derwyn Jones, who takes the customary "new boy" break before his international debut next Saturday, Cardiff have their other four internationals for the visit of the Gwent strugglers.

Newport, the bottom club, travel to Pontypriid with the spectre of relegation to the second division haunting both fallen Gwent giants.

DIVISIONAL TEAMS

South West v London (Bristol): South-West: A Lumsden (Bath), N Best (Northampton), M Denny (Bristol), S Morris (Gloucester), P Holland (Gloucester), M Taitton (Bristol), R Kilchin (Huddersfield), C Clark (Bath), M Regan (Bristol), D Hinkins (Bristol), R Armstrong (Bristol), A Blackmore (Bristol), D Sims (Gloucester), D Eves (Bristol), R Hill (Gloucester).

North v Midlands (Otley): North: W Greenwood (Rugby), J Stirling (Leeds), P Johnson (Derby), S Ravenscroft (Sheff), A Healey (Derby), M Ryan (Worcester), D Seely (Huddersfield), P Smith (Sale), S Mitchell (West Hartlepool), A Smith (Sale), C Vyner (Sale), D Gledhill (Sale), J Foster (Sale), P Marley (Derby), M Watson (West Hartlepool).

Midlands: M Magill (Gloucester), S Huddley (Leicester), S Potter (Leicester), D Edwards (Leicester), R Thornycroft (Northampton), R Angel (Coventry), A Rardon (Leicester), R Hardwick (Coventry), R Cockfield (Leicester), D Garforth (Leicester), C Tarkenton (Leicester), J Phillips (Northampton), R West (Gloucester), G Rans (Nottingham, captain), I Skingley (Bedford).

Reference: J Barclay (Yorkshire).

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McRAE READY
TO MEET THE
RALLYING CRY

SPORT

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 19 1994

WHY BRITAIN MUST
LAY THE GHOST
OF FAILURES PAST

Grobelaar faces new ordeal as media circus closes in

No masks needed, no place to hide

By ROB HUGHES, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

THE attention of the football world will focus on The Dell today, to see not only Bruce Grobelaar's first match in England since he was accused of selling the soul of the game, but also to bear witness to the principle that presumes a man innocent until proven guilty.

Arsenal happen to be Southampton's visitors, but it could be anyone and still the antiquated ground would be crammed to its 15,000 capacity. The stadium may be condemned, but not yet, not by all of us, is the player.

There is a bizarre compulsion to see him in action, for Grobelaar is alleged to be the first man to have fixed a game in English league football for more than 30 years. Doubtless the atmosphere will be ribald, particularly from the 1,500 Arsenal supporters who will be merciless should he concede a goal. How easily they will forget that Grobelaar has always been an error-prone goalkeeper, not least because of his proclamation for gambling on the pace and

fraught with difficulty, that the case may ultimately be left to the quasi court of the Football Association.

It, too, has declared that Grobelaar has the right to a presumption of innocence. The FA could hardly say less, having hired Terry Venables as coach at a time when he was under trial by television, but when the FA charged Grobelaar of conduct likely to bring the game into disrepute, and "of acceptance of consideration with a view to influencing a match", it was less than supportive.

Graham Kelly, the chief executive, for example, uttered his personal view that, though the FA was not prepared to suspend Grobelaar, he (Kelly) believed the goalkeeper would find it difficult to play while the matter was being investigated. There, perhaps, lies the difference between the submissive spirit of an administrator and the competitive will of a sportsman who has faced life and death in a war in his native Africa.

Surely, a combative Grobelaar will be seen today. Lawrie McMenemy, the Southampton director of football, has stood four square with his goalkeeper from the start. Yesterday, after two days of cat and mouse with the media, McMenemy appealed for time and space. "The footballer likes his mind and body to be right," McMenemy said. "It's unlikely either of them could have been 100 per cent on football, but Bruce has trained brilliantly for two days, he wants to play and feels that if he didn't there might appear to be some guilt."

It was up to McMenemy and the team manager, Alan Ball, to look beyond words, into the psychological frame of mind of their goalkeeper before selecting him. "Naturally, if he was a quivering jelly we would advise him to take a rest," McMenemy said. Rather than that there is a belief that their man is, if anything, remotivated by all the clamour and mistrust. If there is a circus attracted to him, he will play on the high wire. McMenemy, again, has found the words this past difficult fortnight to explain why the club has no qualms in trusting Grobelaar. "Apart from the personal point of

direction of the ball, for pulling off magnificent, prophetic saves, or finding he has guessed wrongly.

But the reason the media circus is in town is more basic. It is to examine the nerve of Grobelaar, to see him unmasked, for in his last game for Southampton two weeks ago, against Manchester City, he did wear a surgical mask to protect a facial injury. According to *The Sun*, that was one of the matches he tried to lose. If he did, he failed, for Southampton drew 3-3.

Since the accusations, and since the allegations by the *News of the World* about his private life, Grobelaar has proved what most people suspect of him: that personal pressure cannot throw him off balance as a public performer. He played for Zimbabwe in their 2-1 African nations' cup victory over Zaïre last Sunday. And, on his return, the police "chatted" to him over cups of tea in Southampton, and have so far suggested that any criminal investigation is



Grobelaar, left, and his Southampton team-mate, Heaney, enjoy training yesterday

view, we've got to think about the club," he said. "Bruce has made a big impact here. When we had a bad spell it coincided with him being out injured. I don't suppose if he was suspended and we lost a couple of matches, and if he was shown to be innocent, anyone would consider replaying the games or giving us back the points."

Almost certainly not. The

sporting consideration has come second for long enough in this case. He has been tried by tabloid, and left metaphorically hanging from the nearest goal frame. Today, he comes down, he reverts at least for 90 minutes to the acrobat beneath the crossbar that is his forte, and it scarcely matters that there are unfamiliar faces and figures in front of him.

Ken Monkou is absent,

ironically suspended. Richard Hall and Francis Benali form the immediate barrier in front of Grobelaar; but then Arsenal are without Wright, also suspended. Parlour and possibly, Adams and Smith. And Grobelaar? He will be without the mask. "I won't wear it," he says. "I don't want to hide behind a mask. If they want to see me, I'm right here."

Scotland hoping to break new ground

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

FOR a brief season the Scottish Rugby Union (SRU) will be able to enjoy playing host at the largest recognised rugby venue in the world. Therefore it must be a source of regret that its team goes into the international with South Africa today after eight matches without victory and amid continued mutterings of self-examination.

Murrayfield, refurbished at a cost of some £45 million, will be opened officially by the Princess Royal before the match, which is sponsored by the Royal Bank. It can accommodate 67,500 spectators, though next season Twickenham will hold 75,000. Some seats remain to be filled, which reflects Scotland's lack of success since the palmy days of 1990-91, the new habits formed while the restricted stadium underwent its facelift, and a comparative absence of travelling support.

Nonetheless, these are visitors who have not played the Scots since 1969 and, pro rata, Scotland have enjoyed greater success against the South Africans than any other home union, winning three times in eight matches and twice in the 1960s. For many years, though, the Scottish rugby soul was seared by the memory of the 4-4-0 humiliation by the South Africans of 1951, led on that day by the No 8, Hennie Muller, which heralded a period of deep depression.

Now comes another South African party led by another outstanding back-row forward, Francois Pienaar, and the Scots seem caught in mental anguish. There is glee at the success of Scotland A in Melrose ten days ago, yet they dare not hope that, against formidable opponents, their international luck is about to change.

In fact, all three composite teams fielded against these South Africans have done well, given the acknowledged lack of depth in Scottish rugby and minimal preparation. "It has exposed a good number of our young players to a top rugby country," Ken Smith, the SRU president, said.

However, there is grave doubt that the national side can turn the tide which has flowed against Scotland since early 1993. Moreover, the memory of how New Zealand scored 51 points to 15 at Murrayfield just a year ago is all too fresh.

Much will hinge on the success of one of Scotland's two newcomers, Derrick Paterson, at scrum half. Paterson, 26, must establish his relationship with Craig Chalmers swiftly and hope that his forwards can deal with a South African pack which is about five stone heavier and has a formidable lineout presence in Mark Andrews.

That is also the area where the other players making their

debut, Jeremy Richardson and Philip Schutte, collide. Richardson, 31, has had to wait a long time for his first cap and will hope for a better fate than that of Alistair Macdonald, the Heriot's lock, who won his first against the All Blacks last year and has not been heard of since.

If conditions stay as they were yesterday, cool but dry, South Africa must be favoured to win well. Yet Gavin Hastings, the Scotland captain, seeks the same so that his team can establish a style fitting for the unveiling of the new Murrayfield. "We have to set the pattern for future Scottish games at this magni-

tude, but the composure of the side, and the discipline and dedication of the players in these two games, will be vital."

The South Africans are cautious because they do not know their enemy. They have yet to play against any of the Scotland team, their video study of Scottish defeats in Argentina during the summer has been less than informative and six of the Scotland side which completed the last five nations' championship match, against France, are absent today.

"The first match against all the other countries we have played has been tough," Pienaar said. "Scotland haven't won for such a long time that their backs will be to the wall and that will put extra pressure on us. They will be highly motivated and, in Gavin Hastings they have a captain able to instil a lot of confidence into the team."

But it is also Pienaar's belief that his team, near the end of the most arduous year any international side has had, now possesses the experience and confidence to shape a game according to the circumstances.

That South Africa will win, the possession required is in doubt, and then the tenuous Scottish defence will be tested to the full.

PAST RESULTS: 1993 (Glasgow): Scotland 6 South Africa 0, 1992 (Murrayfield): Scotland 3 South Africa 19, 1991 (Murrayfield): Scotland 0 South Africa 14, 1990 (Murrayfield): Scotland 10 South Africa 17, 1989 (Murrayfield): Scotland 6 South Africa 15, 1988 (Murrayfield): Scotland 6 South Africa 3.

SCOTLAND

A G Hastings (Wettersians)
A G Stanger (Hawick)
S Hastings (Wettersians)
A G Shiell (Melrose)
K M Logan (Stirling County)
C M Chalmers (Melrose)
D W Patterson (W Hartlepool)
A V Sharp (Bristol)
K S Milne (Heriot's FP)
A P Murray (London Scottish)
D J McIvor (Edinburgh Acad)
J F Richardson (Edinburgh Acad)
A I Reed (Bath)
I R Morrison (London Scottish)
G W Weir (Melrose)

SOUTH AFRICA

15 A J Joubert (Nels)
14 P Hendricks (Transvaal)
13 P G Muller (Nels)
12 J C Muller (Transvaal)
11 C M Williams (Western Province)
10 H P le Roux (Transvaal)
9 J H van der Westhuizen (N Tvaal)
8 J P du Randt (Orange Free State)
7 U L Schrick (Transvaal)
6 T G Laubscher (Western Province)
5 J F Pienaar (Transvaal)
4 M G Andrews (Nels)
3 P W Schutte (Transvaal)
2 R J Kruger (Northern Transvaal)
1 R A W Strauss (Transvaal)

Replacements: 16 C A Joubert (Melrose), 17 J C Jardine (Stirling Co), 18 G G Burns (Stewart's Melville FP), 19 R I Wainwright (W Hartlepool), 20 P H Wright (Boroughmuir), 21 K D McKenzie (Stirling Co).
Replacements: 16 K B Pitt (Nels), 17 J T Swaney (Western Province), 18 G K Johnson (Transvaal), 19 J Dalton (Transvaal), 20 I S Sweet (Transvaal), 21 C P Strauss (Western Province).

Flickering images provide peep show on the past

Not even the ageless world heavyweight champion, George Foreman, would go far enough back to recognise the flickering figures on the screen, but he might offer up the odd prayer of thanks in his church in Humble, Texas, just the same. Along with Mike Tyson, Sugar Ray Leonard, Lennox Lewis and any boxer who ever made a fortune out of fighting for an armchair audience.

Exactly 100 years ago, in a purpose-built studio nicknamed the Black Maria in downtown New York, Michael Leonard fought Jack Cushing over six rounds in a bout staged specially for the camera and shown "exclusively" on pier-end peep-show machines in a kinetoscope parlour on Nassau Street just off Broadway. The fight lasted for six one-minute rounds, with a seven-minute rest between rounds while the film was changed. Leonard was paid \$150, Cushing \$50 and neither would have had the slightest idea that the 60 cents viewers had to pay to watch the whole fight—ten cents a round—would lead to the multi-million dollar treasure troves of pay-per-view television today.

The surviving minute's film of the fight, believed to be the earliest sporting film found, if not recorded, will be shown as part of a series of clips from pre-1900 cinema at the National Film Theatre beginning on Monday.

Also on view that night, the first of three shows, will be the earliest film on football, a brief glimpse of Blackburn Rovers beating West Bromwich Albion 4-0, in a league game at Ewood Park in September, 1898, on golf, a wonderful cameo of

the golf match between Willie Park and Willie Fernie at Musselburgh in 1898, and on cricket, a sequence of strokes by Prince Ranjitsinhji in the nets before the first Test against Australia at Sydney in 1897.

The clips are tantalisingly short, but surprisingly clear. Cameras could only hold about a minute's worth of film and the speed was determined by how quickly the photographer would handle on the camera. The ball is not visible in either the football or the cricket

Andrew Longmore sees the opening reels of the sports film industry

films, but the images, the goalkeeping of the West Bromwich goalkeeper, hands clasped behind his back, the Ian Woosnam-like down-on-one-knee response to a successful putt by Park, the imperious air of Ranji as he flicks, drives and cuts the

net bowlers to oblivion in front of a solitary bowler-hatted spectator, reflect equally the timelessness of sport's emotions and the passage of time.

Blackburn supporters would not know the view down Ewood Park to the stark silhouette of terraced houses at the Kidder End nor the fading pale strip of their team, but the shorts are much the same, knee-length and absurdly baggy. Bob Crompton, known as the "greatest Rover of them all", capped 41 times

for England between 1902 and 1914, was playing for Blackburn, though he cannot be picked out.

Of all the sports, though, boxing played the most significant part in the development of the early motion pictures. Compact, with a popular following and box office appeal, easy to film, yet full of emotion and violence, the qualities on which Hollywood was built, it was an ideal sport for the early film-makers. The first film on screen for a paying audience was a fight between Young Griffo and "Battling" Charles Barnett in May 1895 and the first cinema film was also of boxing.

The 1894 fight between Cushing and Leonard received front-page coverage in the *New York World*, more for its cinematic than its sporting value. The ring was primitive, ten feet square bounded by a single rope, the techniques of the fighters equally so. With only six minutes of boxing, there was no time for defence.

Mysteriously, the newspapers did not report who won the fight because, according to the *New York World*, those who were there, including Thomas Edison, the inventor of the electric light and the kinetoscope, were too excited to remember the result and "the accounts of the two fighters vary". In other words, pay the 60 cents and find out for yourself. Presumably, so that everyone had their money's worth, the fight was fixed. In boxing, some things never change.

First screening is at the National Film Theatre 2, Southbank, London, on Monday. Further screenings on Nov 28 and Dec 12.



Edison watched Leonard and Cushing fight for the cameras in 1894 but nobody recorded the result

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ARTS



The genius of Nigel Kennedy, CD Direct offer

Page 13

PLUS: A Georgian Dream, page 5

OUTDOORS



What future for Britain's conifer forests?

Page 12

PLUS: Paul Heiney's farm diary, page 12

COMPETITIONS



Commuter challenge: win a Vauxhall Monterey

Page 17

PLUS: win a Channel Tunnel ticket, page 3

BOOKS



Mel Calman behind the scenes at the Savoy

Page 14

PLUS: Calman book offer, page 14

WEEKEND

MY CHIC DAY-RETURN TO PARIS



The hairdriers are whirring, the curling tongs twirling and the air is thick with enough lacquer to destroy a chunk of the ozone layer the size of Brazil. If anyone lights a cigarette we will surely all go up in a flames. I am sitting in Alexandre de Paris, a beauty salon a hairpin's throw from the Champs Elysées, undergoing "un make-over". Jean-Luc, the *directeur artistique*, has just done my make-up and now Jean-Marie is working on my hair, tugging my limp locks into a structure as lofty and elaborate as the nearby Eiffel Tower.

At one moment I look like a supermodel, the next like a strong contender for the Dolly Parton look-alike trophy. And wasn't it Dolly

Parton who said: "Can you imagine anyone wanting to look this way for real?" "Erm, *ce salon, est-il très bien connu à Paris?*" I ask Jean-Luc, teeth clenched to stop my lipstick smudging. I sound like an amateur ventriloquist. Wisely, Jean-Luc ignores me. I try again. "Ah yes, eet ees very fame-ouse. It is ze salon of Catherine Deneuve and we are ze hairdresses for ze couture shows — Lacroix, Lagerfeld."

Later, I discover that Alexandre is the man who did Wallis Simpson's hair every night for 30 years; the man who teased the tresses of Queen Noor, Princess Grace, Elizabeth Taylor, Greta Garbo and the *doynenne* of fashion writers, Suzy Menkes of the *International Herald Tribune*.

By Julia Llewellyn Smith

Daunting news for a girl in scuffed court shoes and a jacket that cost £15 in a Cambridge market, a spot burgeoning under her lower lip and coal-red eyes from a near sleepless night. The frogs are going to have to work to turn me into a princess.

Time is not on their side. I arrived at the salon at 2pm, hot off the Eurostar Channel Tunnel service. At 4.30pm I must be back at the Gare du Nord. With such a tight schedule, my fellow day-trippers had plumped for the tried and tested: visits to the

Louvre, lunch at La Tour d'Argent, a trawl through the boutiques of the Avenue Montaigne or, in one case, a pilgrimage to the Virgin MegaStore.

I, however, was not convinced. It is not, after all, as if London lacks museums, designer shops or world-class restaurants. I was going to Paris in search of the one ingredient that no number of European directives can ever instil into the British soul: glamour.

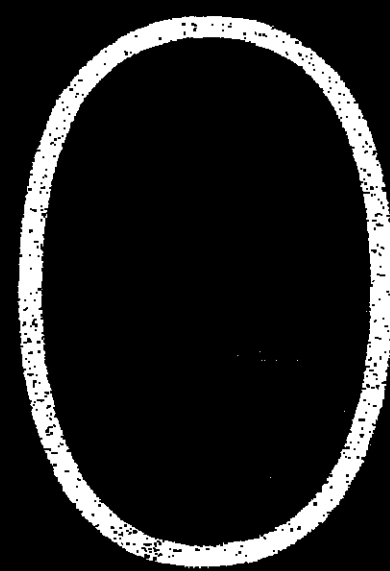
It was hard to remember this at 8am, as I staggered blearily through London's Waterloo station, searching for the international concourse. I reminded myself that this was an historic moment, that this was only the second day that commercial passengers could travel through the tunnel, a bit like the

second day on the Liverpool and Manchester railway, or the second transatlantic crossing on Concorde.

OK, it wasn't quite the same as being the first, but we'd left the booking too late for that. John, the photographer, and I consoled ourselves that we'd still be able to boast about our trip for months to come. The other passengers clearly felt the same. On the grey and yellow train, there was an atmosphere of subdued exuberance. People were checking the batteries of their camcorders and popping champagne corks. Even the most phlegmatic of our number, sitting immersed in their copies of the *Daily Mail* as if they were on the

Continued on page 3, col 1

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DANCE

John Percival

LES BALLETS JAZZ: This company from Montreal aims for easy viewing. Under a new director since its previous London visit in 1990, maybe it will improve on the very bland impression it left then. One programme includes music by the Penguin Cafe Orchestra and the Beatles, and choreography by Jennifer Muller, who can be lively (Monday 21, Tuesday 22, Friday 25 and Saturday 26). The other programme kicks off with Miles Davis music and the choreographers include William Whitener (remembered as a brilliant dancer with Twyla Tharp) and Margo Sappington who did the dances for *Oh, Calcutta!* (Wednesday 23, Thursday 24 and Sunday 27). Sadler's Wells Theatre, Rosebery Avenue, London EC1 (071-713 6060), Monday 21 to Friday 25, 8pm; Saturday 26, 8pm; Sunday 27, 6.30pm. £

ASHTON CELEBRATION: Bernard Haitink has finished his stint of conducting *Daphnis and Chloé* for the Royal Ballet, but Barry Wordsworth takes over in the pit and the marvellously expressive Trinidad Seviliano continues as *Chloé* in Frederick Ashton's superb choreography. So many Royal Ballet dancers are injured that the rest of the evening's cast is problematical, but with *Symphonic Variations* also on the programme the chance to see two masterworks is not to be missed. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London WC1 (071-304 4000), Mondays 21 and 28, Wednesday 30, 7.30pm. £

JAZZ

Clive Davis

RUTH BROWN: Nobody delivers a risqué lyric with as much verve as Ruth Brown, the *grande dame* of rhythm and blues. Forty years after ruling over the American blues charts, she has overcome recurrent illness to keep the faith alive: the voice, raw and gravelly, still brings a room to order in seconds. The band she brought to Britain last time around was a perfect combination of growling Hammond organ, wailing tenor and alto saxophones and funky guitar. Ronnie Scott's, Broad Street, Birmingham (021-643 4525), Monday 21 to Saturday 26; (also Ronnie Scott's, Frith St London W1 (071-439 0747), Monday 28 to Saturday December 10).

MUHAL RICHARD ABRAMS: The Arts Council's Contemporary Music Network continues its quixotic mission to promote the avant-garde. This is the first British tour by the pianist and multi-disciplinary composer Muhai Richard Abrams, a co-founder of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Music. He leads a band featuring alto sax player Robert De Bellis and trumpeter Eddie Allen. Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, London SE1 (071-428 8800), Friday 25, 7.45pm; Lawrence Batley Theatre, Huddersfield (0484 430528), Saturday 26, 9.45pm; Adrian Boult Hall, Birmingham (021-236 3899), Sunday 27, 7.30pm.

CLASSICAL

Richard Morrison

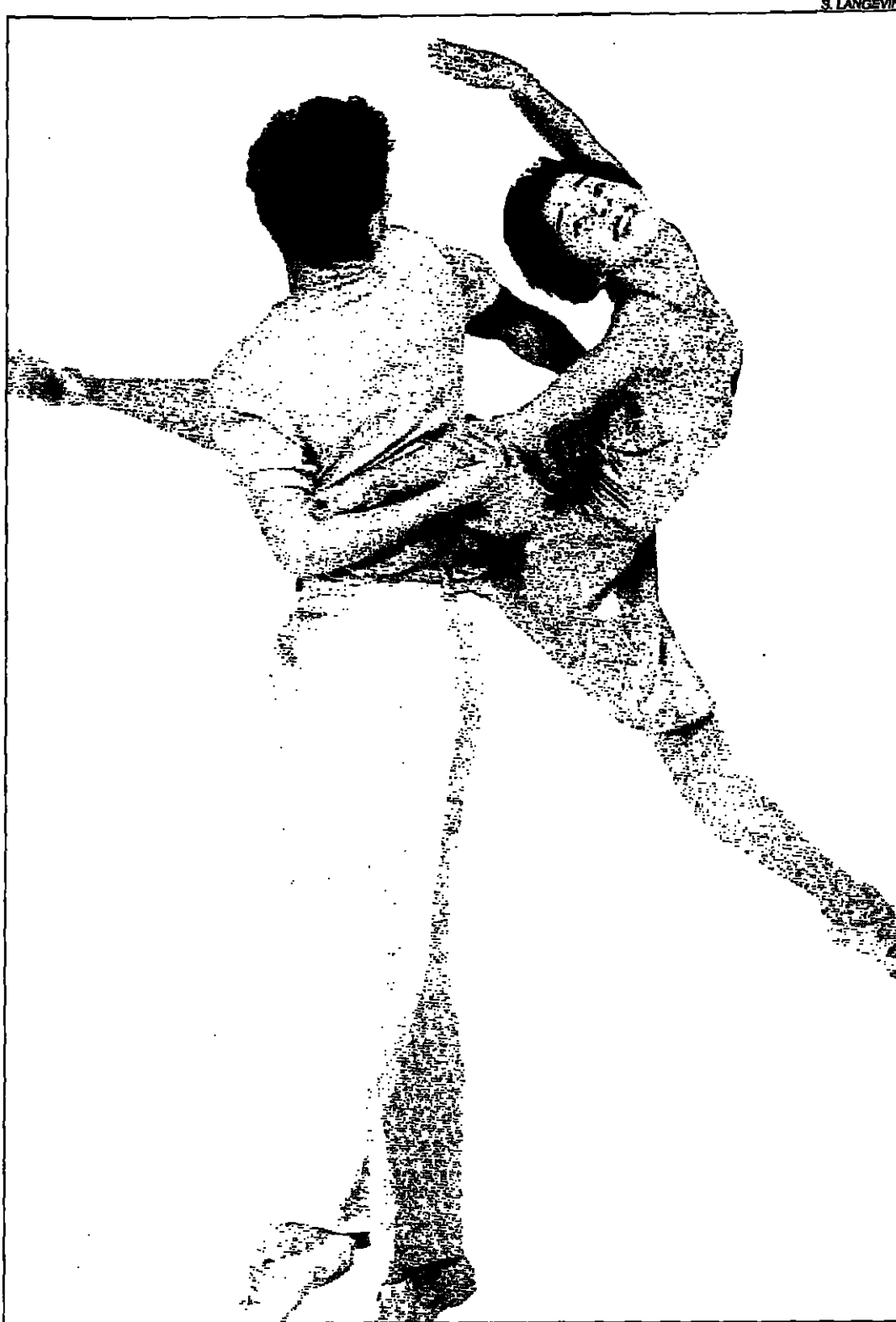
PURCELL A-PLenty: As the 1995 tercentenary of Henry Purcell's death draws nearer, the big guns of Baroque music are being wheeled out. None comes bigger than John Eliot Gardiner, who conducts two Purcell concertos this week. Tonight there is a performance of *King Arthur*, the not-quite-an-opera with some dazzlingly picturesque music. Simon Callow narrates the story. Then on Tuesday, St Cecilia's Day is celebrated with all the music that Purcell wrote for that feast — a big event in late 17th-century England. Queen Elizabeth Hall, London SE1 (071-428 8800), tonight, Tuesday 22, 7.45pm. £

HUDDESFIELD PREMIER: The invigorating Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival continues with a performance (tonight, St Paul's Hall, 7.30pm) by the excellent Cambridge New Music Players, including pieces by James Clapperton and Thomas Adès, and a visit tomorrow (Town Hall, 7.30pm) by the virtuosic Canadian percussion group, Nexus, which plays everything from John Cage and a new Gavin Bryars piece. Jonathan Harvey's IRCAM pieces are displayed on Tuesday (Batley Theatre, 1pm) and on Friday and Saturday (Batley Theatre, 7.30pm and 3pm, respectively) the Vienna Art Orchestra presents a "visual jazz-theatre tribute" to Jean Cocteau's film *La Belle et la Bête*. Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival: Box office and details 0484 430528.

ROCK

David Sinclair

CYNDI LAUPER: The colossal success of Cyndi Lauper's greatest hits album, *Twelve Deadly Cyns... And Then Some*, has taken most



Yvan Michaud and Nathalie Huot, of Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal, perform *Sweet Surrender*

people by surprise. But look beyond the playful, Barbie-on-acid, look and listen without prejudice to that voice, apparently as shrill as her hair colour, and you will find a performer of rare sensitivity and grace. She remains undervalued in America, and her recent albums have been disappointing. But on stage she has energy, charm and back catalogue gems to spare. A full British tour is scheduled for February 1995, including two shows at the Albert Hall (February 11 and 12). Meanwhile, here are her only two UK shows this year. Shepherd's Bush Empire, London W12 (081-740 7474), Wednesday 23 and Thursday 24, 7.30pm.

PAUL WELLER: A musician reborn. Paul Weller now plays precisely nothing from his days with either the Jam or the Style Council, concentrating instead on material

from the two solo albums which he has released to such fulsome acclaim in the 1990s. This year's live album, *Live Wood*, confirmed his conversion to a strand of soul-fused, psychedelic rock which echoes the work of 1960s pioneers Traffic, but performed with the terse authority which still marks Weller out as a child of the punk revolution. Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, London SW7 (071-589 8212), Tuesday 22, Wednesday 23, Thursday 24; Aston Villa Leisure Centre, Aston Hall Road, Birmingham (021-328 4884), Saturday 26, Sunday 27; Newcastle City Hall, Northumberland Road (091-261 2606), Tuesday 29; Barrowlands, Gallowgate, Glasgow (041-556 5554), Wednesday 30, December 1; and at G-Mex, Manchester, December 2; Shepherd's Bush Empire, London, December 4; all shows 7.30pm.

OPERA

Rodney Milnes

KHOVANSCHINA: Or, as the English National Opera helpfully subtitles it, *The Khovansky Affair*. Mussorgsky's "other" masterpiece has what is usually considered an impenetrable plot, the problem being that the subject is the emergence of modern Russia through the reforms of Peter the Great, but when Mussorgsky composed it any representation of a member of the Romanov dynasty on stage was forbidden — so it is a case of *Khovanschina* without the Tsar. But hearing the piece in English for the first time within living memory should be an enormous help, and the ENO has assembled a fine cast, headed by Willard White as the feudal anti-

reformist Ivan Khovansky. Kim Begley as the devious Prince Golitsyn, with Anne-Marie Owens and Gwynne Howell representing the reactionary Old Believers, who commit mass suicide in the spectacular finale. Stan Edwards conducts, and the American producer Francesca Zambello makes her company debut. Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (071-836 3161), Thursday 24, 6.30pm. £

THE SECOND MRS KONG: A new venue — and one that metropolitan opera-goers will find convenient — for Glyndebourne Touring Opera as it takes Birnby's riveting new piece around the country. Both locals and reverse-commuters should catch this original, touching comic fantasy about a love-mismatch across the ages — giant ape and chocolate-box icon — in Tom Cairns's stunning production. Philip Langridge and Helen Field lead the cast. Elgar Howarth conducts. New Victoria Theatre, Woking (0483 761144), Friday 25, 7.15pm. £

FILMS

Geoff Browne

SECOND BEST (12): No squealing tyres or drug busts in Chris Menges's treatment of the novel by David Cook: just a withdrawn single man and the prickly orphan boy he hopes to adopt, two damaged lives trying to heal in a plain, damp Welsh village. However did Hollywood come to finance it? William Hurt is not obvious casting as a Welsh postmaster, but his laidback, inward-looking style entirely suits the character. A few miscalculations aside, Menges and Cook (who wrote the script) offer a delicately observed film, full of love, pain, and wry humour. MGM Fulham Road (071-370 2636); Trocadero (071-434 0031); Warner (071-437 4343).

THREE COLOURS: RED (15): Krzysztof Kieslowski ends his colour trilogy, and supposedly his film career, with a jigsaw puzzle, showing how the lives of two students and a retired judge intersect with each other and fate. Kieslowski's style seems over-analytical, the performances of Irène Jacob and Jean-Louis Trintignant as the student and judge who mellow into affection, give the film a strong emotional core. Chelsea (071-351 3742); Gate (071-727 4043); Lumiere (071-836 0691); Renoir (071-837 8402); Screen/Hill (071-435 3366).

More films, page 6.

THEATRE

Benedict Nightingale

THREE TALL WOMEN: Edward Albee's painful memories of an impossible mother become partly a vivid case-study of senility, partly a powerful meditation on change, decay and death. Maggie Smith brings an astonishing blend of befuddlement, rage, humour and pathos to the slippery business of being 91. Wyndham's, Charing Cross Road, London WC2 (071-369 1736), Evening: Monday to Saturday, 8pm;

matinées: Wednesday and Saturday, 3pm.

THE MASTER BUILDER: Brian Cox is at his brashiest as Solness — architect, petty dictator, dreamer and (often self-portrait) — in a production from the Lyceum, Edinburgh, that retains its Scots punch and lack of fuss. Riverside Studios, Crisp Road, London W6 (081-741 2255), Evening: Monday to Saturday, 7.45pm; matinee: Saturday at 2.30pm. £

More theatre, page 6.

MUSEUMS

John Russell Taylor

MEXICAN GALLERY: The latest stage in the rearrangement and re-presentation of the British Museum's permanent collection is a new Mexican gallery at the north end of the King's Gallery, which will eventually lead into a suite of new



A Huastec stone sculpture

galleries to house native American art returned from the Museum of Mankind. This first new room is designed by the Mexican architect Teodoro Gonzalez de Leon in a style evoking pre-Columbian Mexican architecture, and displays stone sculptures from the Huastec and Maya cultures, Olmec ceremonial jades and Aztec codices. The effect is impressive and somewhat sinister — perhaps because the civilisations concerned were impressive and somewhat sinister. British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1 (071-636 1555), Monday to Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday, 2.30-6pm. £

HEAVEN ON EARTH: With the completion of the new University of Nottingham Arts Centre, its already operative gallery space has been renamed the Djanogly Art Gallery. Its first exhibition in this new guise is subtitled *The Religion of Beauty in Late Victorian Art*, and features a lot of paintings mythologising woman as Madonna or *femme fatale* and insisting on the Decadent linkage of love and death. It begins with Rossetti and Burne-Jones, and takes in Watts among the Victorian classics. But the most interesting part is devoted to lesser-known, newly-fashionable artists such as Evelyn de Morgan and Eleanor Fortescue-Brickdale. Djanogly Art Gallery, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham (0115 9513192), Monday to Friday, 10am-6pm; Saturday, 11am-6pm; Sunday, 2-5pm; until November 27. £

GALLERIES

Richard Cork

FACE TO FACE: While Rembrandt's paintings of himself are renowned, the wider field of artists' self-portraits has been neglected. Now the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool redresses the balance. Although restricted to British and Irish collections, curator Xanthe Brooke has brought together a rich and revealing array of images spanning three centuries of European art. Women only make a fleeting appearance, most spectacularly in Vigee le Brun's flamboyant *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat*. But, among the male painters, variety abounds. Van Dyck preens himself beside a sunflower. Stubbs sits stolidly on a white hunter, and Hogarth looks as pugnacious as his dog. Even the least familiar artists spring vividly to life, and reveal how they wanted to be seen by patrons and posterity alike. Walker Art Gallery, William Brown Street, Liverpool (051-207 0001), until January 8. £

KALIGHAT: A delightful survey of the 19th-century Indian paintings made for pilgrims visiting the great Calcutta temple of the Hindu goddess "Kali the Terrible and Protecting Mother of All". These bold and surprisingly modern pictures were sold on stalls outside the temple. But many have since been mislaid, and the Victoria and Albert Museum now possesses the largest collection in the world. The artist and novelist Bhabra Khanna has selected a splendid array of images from this previously neglected treasure-house. Gods mingle with courtesans, while parrots, snakes and pigeons add to the vitality of paintings which move, with buoyancy and ease, from the sacred to the secular. Victoria and Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 (071-938 8500), until January 15. £

CHILDREN

LONDON

The Snow Queen: Hans Christian Andersen's magical winter tale adapted by Vicky Ireland. Polka Theatre for Children, 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon, SW19 (081-543 4889), today at 2pm and 5.30pm (until February 6). Adults and children £8. £

Fairytale Forest: Presented by IOU, the visual theatre company. Listen to a Grimm's fairytale accompanied by forest noises (woodpeckers, rushing streams, distant thunder). Ballroom Floor, Festival Hall Galleries, South Bank Centre, SE1 (071-921 0000), Tuesday, 22, 10am to 10.30pm. Admission free. £

Sleeping Beauty: Puppet show. Little Angel Theatre, 14 Dagmar Passage, Cross Street, N1 (071-226 1787), today and tomorrow at 11am (for three-year-olds upwards) and 3pm (for five-year-olds upwards). Adults £5.50, children £4.50. £

BEDFORDSHIRE

Create Your Own Camouflage: Mask. See how animals make themselves "invisible". Visitor Centre, Priory Country Park, Bedford (0234 364213), tomorrow from 2.30pm-4.15pm. Children 50p.

BERKSHIRE

Story-Telling by Father Christmas: Also adventure playground, nature trail, etc. Wellington Country Park, Riseley (0734 326444), tomorrow from 10am. Children £1. £

CORNWALL

Watch an Eagle Training Flight: Follow the "World Explorer" nature trail and venture inside Pets Corner at this rare bird-breeding centre (also other, monkeys, farm animals). Paradise Park, Hayle, near St Ives (0736 753365), today and tomorrow from 10am-3pm (eagle flight at 2.30pm, weather permitting). Adults £3, children £2. £



The majestic eagle

LANCASHIRE

Animal Children's Antiques Roadshow: Bring along your treasures for this recording on the Sherlock Holmes set at Granada. Television studios. Presenters will be wearing Victorian costume. Granada Studios, Manchester (0836 583684) for free tickets. The show will be recorded tomorrow at 10am and will be broadcast nearer Christmas. £

NORFOLK

Carols, Dancing, Music and Family Fun: Suitable for eight-year-olds upward. Thursford Green, Thursford (0328 878477), today (until December 23) at 2.30pm and 7pm. Adults and children £11.25. £

OXFORDSHIRE

Dickens for Children: A comic version of *A Christmas Carol* for five and over. Cutteslowe Community Centre, Oxford (0865 252838), today at 3pm. Adults £1.50, children £1. £

SCOTLAND

Satrosphere: Test out the shadow wall which reveals primary and secondary colours when you stand in front of it. Plus nearly 100 hands-on scientific exhibits at this award-winning discovery centre. Satrosphere, 19 Justice Mill Lane, Aberdeen (0224 213232), today from 10am-5pm and tomorrow from 1.30pm-5pm. Adults £3, children £1.50. £

WALES

Alice in Wonderland Exhibition: Pop down a (synthetic) rabbit hole; meet life-size characters; and wear headphones to hear Alice's story. Visitor Centre, Llandudno (0492 860082), today from 10am-5pm. Adults £2.50, children £1.95. £

JANE BIDDER

Ruth Gledhill joins in hymns and prayers at a modern church in the suburbs

AT YOUR SERVICE



PASSERS-BY who witnessed the building of this church in 1988 on land between Cheam and Ewell would stop to ask the workers if Howell Hill was about to have a new Tesco. Approaching it at night, guided through the mist of commuter land by the bright neon cross set in a sloping timber roof, I felt like a skier chancing upon a pine chalet in an inviting but deceptively treacherous terrain.

Apart from the front two rows, proof that in some denominations nothing changes, the 550-seat building was filled with worshippers of all ages. There was a surprising number of young adults and teenagers. The brightly-coloured nine-foot diameter satin and taffeta wall-hanging behind the dais looked at first glance like a form of ecclesiastical dart board, but more careful analysis suggested it might be an analogy for light and dark.

A grand piano dominated one corner and, this being a traditional evangelical church, the large band included one person on a tambourine. The amassed musicians opened the service with a rapid succession of modern gospel songs and hymns, the words projected on the wall before us. "Father we thank you for the great opportunity to come together as your people to celebrate who you are and all you have done, not only for us but for people throughout the world and indeed the whole of your creation," said our worship leader Pete Meadows, before introducing the guest preacher, Dr John Sentamu, a former judge in the High Court of Uganda and now vicar of Holy Trinity in Tulsa Hill, Brixton, in London.

Our creed was unlike any other



The guest preacher, Dr John Sentamu, expounding the need for change during his sermon

I had said in church, but biblically based, on the compelling hymn used by St Paul in the second chapter of his letter to the Philippians. "Did Christ Jesus share the very nature of God?" asked the words on the overhead projector. "He did," the congregation replied. "Did he make himself nothing, taking the very nature of a slave?" Our announcements, however, were reassuringly modern, and we were invited to "marriage matters seminars, for those who are married, thinking of being married or thinking of stopping being married." The next task was to form ourselves into groups and to imagine ourselves as participants in the biblical story of Christ washing his disciples' feet, before more hymns were sung and prayers invited from the congregation. "Jesus we worship you," said one man. "Thank you for making me me," said another. "Thank you for setting us free from the chains that only you can unlock," responded a third. Then came more songs, while on the dais the clergy prayed in preparation for Dr Sentamu's sermon. "It is far easier to meet people in the direction of their prejudices than in the direction of truth," said Dr Sentamu, going on to explore the need for change. "My definition of tradition is simply the blessings of yesterday. Change is the vision of a desirable future." He told the story of a young man converted at an evangelical rally who was told to practise his new-found faith in any "church of God". The youngster went to his parish church and clasped his hands "whenever the preacher mentioned Jesus". The stiff-necked man and women regarded his evangelical exuberance with disdain, verging on contempt, and ignored him. Afterwards, he asked the preacher: "This is the church of God isn't it?" The clergyman responded: "My dear man, this isn't the church of God. This is the Church of England."

St Paul's Church Centre, Northey Avenue, Howell Hill, Cheam, Surrey, SM2 7HS (081-643 3838). VICAR: The Rev Andrew Thomas ARCHITECTURE: Modern building, and one of the few Anglican churches to have a full-immersion baptismal pool. **** SERMON: An intelligent, powerful though rather long testimony from Dr John Sentamu, a former magistrate and judge and a council member of the Family Welfare Association. **** MUSIC: The highlight was a woman soloist who sang to us while she played the piano. *** LITURGY: Loosely Anglican, with an emphasis on the person of Jesus Christ. ** SPIRITUAL HIGH: The large number of modern hymns, with demanding and predictably lively tunes, left me exhausted. *

* stars are awarded to a maximum of five.

COVER STORY

3

'Two hours with the stylist. Now I know how it is to be Ivana Trump'



Time for a quick snooze after the early morning start

Continued from page 1
7.56 from Croydon, could not prevent their newspapers from rustling in excitement as the train pulled out at 8.23 precisely.

This is not, after all, an average train journey. For a start, the Eurostar staff are waving us off from the platform. "Bet they won't be doing that in two weeks' time," says somebody. And who is this Inspector Clouseau figure, whose voice is crackling over the intercom? "Ladées and gentlemen. May I have your attention please." Heaven, a French person is in charge of this locomotive.

The foreign influence is everywhere. The man at the mini-bar is having to be convinced he can accept a Scottish £10 note. And my breakfast, a BLT, comes disguised as a *bacon salade et tomate*, or for those on the Brussels run, a *spek met sla en schijfjes tomaat*.

But Eurostar is obviously anxious to minimise any culture shock, because 20 minutes out of London our non-stop service halts at a station called Shordlands. "Oh, ladées and gentlemen I am sorry for the delay." This is more like it.

Soon we are off again, however, meandering through Kent down to the coast. I try to sleep but am woken by passport control, and a group of train spotters, loudly discussing gauges and pistons. There is a lot of this kind of talk: most of the passengers on the half-empty train seem to be solitary railway enthusiasts, miffed at not having made the first run

because: "The bloody train was full of journalists."

Fortunately, they are distracted from this theme as the brightly-lit train dives into the tunnel. It emerges 18 minutes later into the bright sunshine of the Pas-de-Calais. Everybody claps.

We whizz through northern France at 190mph and arrive at the Gare du Nord bang on schedule at 12.23 local time. It has all been incredibly relaxed. If we had come on the plane we would have had to queue at passport control and hustle through customs; here, we simply turn right, go down an escalator and head straight for the taxi rank.

Ten minutes later we are at the Galeries Lafayette, the department store which proves my theory that people who say that money doesn't buy happiness, do not know where to shop. In this vast emporium, 75,000 brand names nestle under one roof. On the first floor, scores of Parisians are scanning the racks as if they are panning for gold. A woman in a bottom-skimming mini-kilt twirls in front of a mirror. "There's no point bothering with a skirt, it's going to be that short," says John, in Anglo-Saxon bemusement.

I want everything: I want the thigh-length suede boots, the silver lamé trousers and the black lace bodystocking. But there is no time. We leap in another taxi and make our way to Alexandre de Paris.

We have five minutes to spare, so we gulp down a coffee at the café below. We are



Relaxing at a café in the autumn sun before heading upstairs to the salon of Alexandre de Paris to be transformed with a new hairdo and make-up

surrounded by the kind of women I aspire to be: Chanel handbags on the table, Hermès scarves around their necks and an immaculately coiffed dog at their Gucci-clad feet. Even in winter, you know that under their tapered trousers, their legs are waxed and their skin glows with the accumulated effect of years of anti-cellulite creams.

These women would rather join a nunnery than go out with wet hair or no earrings. Their husbands would rather support Belgium in the World Cup than sport a soup-stained tie, or leave their shirt untucked.

How do they do it? I am about to find out and as I mount the stairs to the salon I feel quite faint at the recollection of a lifetime of laddered thighs and grubby bra straps. If I were Alexandre and his staff, I would find it hard to

keep a straight face and, as this is Paris, I am quite prepared to be greeted with a barely-concealed snigger.

Professionalism wins, however, and no one at the salon raises so much as a well-plucked eyebrow as I stumble in. I am bundled into a white robe and before I know it I am lying back in a chair having my hair washed and gazing up at the chandeliers. I am then rushed into a *cabine*, laid flat on what looks like a dentist's chair, while Jean-Luc proceeds to smother me with the amount of make-up I normally would wear in the course of a year. I can see nothing except the inscription "100 waits Made in Belgium" on the lightbulb that is illuminating my every blackhead.

"Are you using blue and purple?" I ask Jean-Luc. He shudders. "Oh no! I hate blue and purple! I am using brown



Dozing over the stylish clothes at the vast department store of Galeries Lafayette



and grey." And black, he might have added, I think when he finally lets me look in the mirror. There is so much kohl around my eyes, I look like I have been through two rounds with Rocky Marciano. But I do like my lips, formerly the size of a sparrow's bottom

now refashioned into a Cindy Crawford pout, while my usually non-existent eyebrows now look like well-fed caterpillars.

I have plenty of time to ponder on this reincarnation when I move into the main salon, for the hairdo. Worry-

ing about catching the train, I ask Jean-Marie to put my hair up, a task which takes me five seconds at home. Not so in Paris. An hour-and-a-half later, we are completing the finishing touches.

I feel as if a small animal is nesting on my head. My hair

has the texture of a Brillo pad and contains so many pins I could pass for a voodoo doll. Now I know how it is to be Ivana Trump. I also know how French women keep their figures, there has been no time for even a *pain au chocolat*, and although the salon presented me with a delicious salad I am still too frightened of cracking my make-up to risk more than a mouthful.

If I had been going to a grand ball, the effect would have been tremendous. Since I planned to catch the train home, meet some friends for a quick drink and watch a recording of *EastEnders*, the effort was somewhat wasted. Still, on the way back to the station I got some valuable practice in getting in and out of a taxi without bashing my beehive on the roof, and had the gratifying experience of seeing the conductor who had sold me a coffee that morning do a double-take as he glimpsed me on the return journey.

When I walked into the bar in London, it took a friend several seconds to recognise me. "You look like Ursula Andress," he finally said.

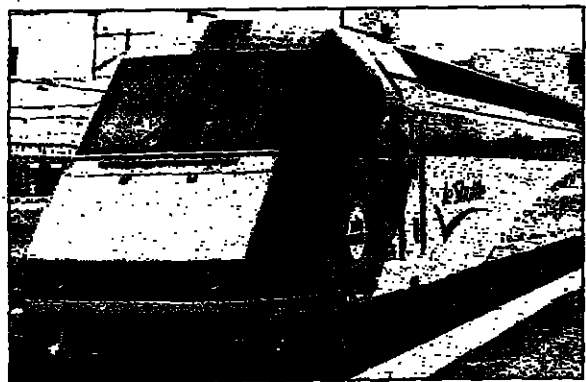
Would I recommend a trip to Paris to get your hair done? Only if I could stay the night next time, to fit in more shopping, and only if I was preparing for a suitably grand occasion. That night it took another hour for me to take my hair down and scrub off the make-up. Hairpins were dropping from my scalp like needles from a dying Christmas tree. I counted 68 in total and several more. I am sure, are still in there somewhere, penetrating my brain. But the French know that you have to suffer to be beautiful. As Helena Rubenstein once said: "There are no ugly women, only lazy ones."

● Alexandre de Paris, 3 avenue Matignon, 75008 Paris 010 33 1 456 31 506; fax 010 33 1 45 56 00 12. Prices of make-overs vary: mine cost about £100.

● See page 22 for details of the Eurostar service.

Cover and feature photographs by JOHN ANGERSON

THE TIMES Take Le Shuttle to France free



Eurotunnel's Le Shuttle car/passenger service is set to revolutionise cross-Channel travel. Operating on a rail-loop between Folkestone and Calais, the journey will take just 35 minutes platform to platform - with no fear of bad weather delays. To mark the start of this service, Eurotunnel is collaborating with *The Times* to offer 20 readers a chance to sample the ease of crossing before the official full schedule comes into operation. We have 20 day-return tickets for a car (up to 1.85m high) and all occupants to give away on the special Overture service which will operate until December 2. The Overture service runs hourly from Monday to Friday, from 8am to 8pm, so taking a morning service from Folkestone will give our winners plenty of time for some Christmas shopping in France.

TO ENTER:

All you have to do is answer these simple questions:

1. How long does the Le Shuttle journey take from platform to platform?

2. How many separate cross-Channel bores form the tunnel?...a) one b) two c) three?

Then dial 0891 66 55 94 and leave your answers, followed by your name, address and daytime phone number.

Winners will be selected at random after the lines close at midnight on Monday November 21. Calls cost (per minute)

39p cheap rate, 49p other times.

Le Shuttle



WHERE TO SHOP FOR GIFTS IN PARIS

PARIS is a shopper's paradise. While the city's most expensive shopping is still to be found on the rue de Faubourg St Honoré and Avenue Montaigne, there are many small boutiques scattered across the city which offer delightful and original Christmas gifts to suit all pockets. The trick is knowing where to look. Here is a list of some personal favourites.

● What do Madonna, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sinead O'Connor have in common? When they're in town they all shop at L'Eclaireur. One of the city's most fashionable shops, its exposed brickwork and hardwood floors provide the perfect foil for the rich colours and eccentric shapes of designers Costume National, Dolce & Gabbana, Ann Demeulemeester and Martin Margiela. Downstairs are men's lines from Dries Van Noten, Issey Miyake and Comme des Garçons. L'Eclaireur, 3 rue des Rosiers, 75004 Paris (48 87 10 22).

● For sophisticated patchwork, visit A la Bonne Renommée, where Catherine Legrand and Elisabeth Graciac sell their exquisite cushions, bags and evening wear fashioned from scraps of coloured velvet and silk. A la Bonne Renommée, 26 rue Vieille du Temple, 75004 Paris (42 72 03 86).

● For charming children's wear, visit Nicole Puech's boutique Croissant, which stocks her original designs, many hand-knitted, for babies and children up to eight. Croissant, 3 rue Saint Merri, 75004 Paris (48 87 32 88).

● A L'Olivier offers an enormous selection of wonderful olive oils. A L'Olivier, 23 rue de Rivoli, 75004 Paris (48 04 86 59).

● A favourite of models and stylists, the Japanese store Shu Uemura's unbeatable colour range, low prices and elegant packaging make it a must for make-up enthusiasts. Shu Uemura, 176 Boulevard Saint Germain, 75006 Paris (45 48 02 55).

● Le Mouton à Cinq Pattes has sold discounted designer clothes to Parisians for more than 30 years. You can find a

Gaultier suit or Montana dresses at big discounts. Le Mouton à Cinq Pattes, 19 rue Gregoire de Tours, 75006 Paris (43 29 73 56).

● At Exatement Fauve, Christine Vallet sells necklaces and earrings of hand-made glass pearls. Exatement Fauve, 5 rue Princesse, 75006 Paris.

● The deliciously scented candles sold by three British artists at Diptyque make perfect Christmas presents. Diptyque, 34 Boulevard St Germain, 75005 Paris (43 26 45 27).

● For presents for gourmet friends, head to the grocer to the stars Fauchon, where food takes on an art status. Fauchon, 26-28 place de la Madeleine, 75008 Paris (47 42 60 11).

● Annick Goutal's beautifully packaged scents in 14 natural flower essences are displayed in her cream and gold shop. Annick Goutal, 14 rue de Castiglione, 75001 Paris (42 60 52 82).

● For hip interiors, visit En attendant les barbares, which stocks eclectic furniture and ornaments by 40 young French designers. En attendant les barbares, 50 rue Etienne Marcel, 75002 Paris (42 33 37 87).

● For a selection of gift ideas don't miss Au Printemps and Galeries Lafayette, both of which have dedicated an entire floor to Christmas shoppers. Au Printemps, 64 Boulevard Haussmann, 75009 Paris (42 82 50 00); Galeries Lafayette, 40 Boulevard Haussmann, 75009 Paris (42 82 34 56).

SUSAN BELL

Channel tunnel special, pages 22-24

Chase proudly announces the sponsorship of the
Chase Manhattan North American Gallery
at the
British Museum



Chase congratulates the British Museum
on the launch of its
250th Anniversary Development Programme



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This production is financially supported by Unilever

NEW ON VIDEO: Winter sports in Jamaica; Alain Delon in the heat of the sun

WEST END ENTERTAINMENT

THEATRE GUIDE

DR KNOCK Geoffrey Beavers takes the role in Jules Romains' celebrated comic about the medical profession and public gubbin'. San Wallers directs. Orange Tree, Clarence St, Richmond (01-540 3030). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat Sat, 4pm. Until Nov 26.

THE EDITING PROCESS Stephen Duddy directs Alan Howard and Phyllis Scalas in Meredith Oakes's thriller comedy about publishing malfunctions. Royal Court, Sloane Square, SW1 (01-730 1745). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 3.30pm. Until Dec 3.

HAMLET Peter Hall directs Stephen Dillane's darkly humorous, self-delecting Prince, backed by excellent playing from Michael Pennington, Donald Sinden and Alan Dobie. Old Vic, Shatterbury Avenue, W1 (01-494 5055). Mon-Sat, 7.15pm, mat Thurs and Sat, 3pm.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE Peter Selars's extremely controversial staging (set in Venice Beach, California) at least has a powerful central performance by the black actor Paul Butler. Barbican, 54, Strand, EC2 (01-636 8651). Today, 2pm and 7.30pm.

MISS JULIE Acclaimed for his production of *A Doll's House*, last writer, Sue Lutton now directs Stendhal's drama of lust and submission. Presented by Kadooni. New End, 27 New End, Hampstead, NW3 (01-794 0023). Tue-Sun, 7.30pm. Mat Sun, 4.30pm. Until Dec 11.

MOLLY SWEENEY Brian Ford directs his own superb play. Catherine Byrne, Mark Lambert and T.P. McKenna voice feelings to do with blindness, racism and much more. Almeida, Almeida Street, N1 (01-359 4404). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Sat, 4pm.

MOSCOW STATIONS Tom Courtenay's one-man performance as an alcoholic poet on the Moscow Underground. You probably won't see him, more watching being his role. Samit, Charing Cross Road, W1 (01-494 5055). Mon-Sat, 8pm.

OLIVER! Lavish Cameron Mackintosh revival of the Bart musical. Jonathan Pryce plays Fagin. Sam Mendes directs. Returns only until Jan 9. Palladium, Argyll St, W1 (01-494 5023). New previewing, 7.30pm. Opens Dec 8, 7pm.

ON APPROVAL Peter Hall gives us the Lorraine play as it was and as a sophisticated, diverting but relatively

Under Bellingham) seek happiness. Old Vic, Waterloo Rd, SE1 (01-928 7151). Mon-Fri, 7.45pm, Sat, 8pm, mat Wed, 2.30pm and Sat, 4pm.

A SONG AT TWILIGHT A tatty men of letters is forced by an old dame to look back on his discarded life. John Cumin in the role. Court, 10, St. James's, W1 (01-494 5055). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm. Until Dec 10.

THE WITNESS Mark Rydman and Michael Rucko star in the roles of the two brothers, roving cowboy and timid seafarer, in Matthew Ward's mostly admirable revival of Sam Shepard's drama of the divided human personality. Dossier, Eastham St, WC2 (01-369 1732). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Thurs and Sat, 3pm. Until Dec 3.

THE UGLY MAN Brad Fraser's comic comedy, set in a rural corner of Arizona, inspired by the plot of the 1959 film *The Ugly American*. BAC, Lonsdale Hill, London SW11 (01-222 2223). Tue-Sat, 8pm, Sun, 6pm. Until Nov 27.

LONG RUNNERS

- Arca** Haymarket (01-730 8800).
- Beautiful Thing** Apollo (01-494 5055).
- Blood** Brothers, Phoenix (01-567 1044).
- Busby** Victoria Palace (01-434 1317).
- Cats** New London (01-405 0072).
- Capote** Prince of Wales (01-494 5055).
- For You** Prince Edward (01-734 8651).
- Don't Dress for Dinner** Duchess (01-434 5070).
- Five Guys Named Moe** Lyric (01-494 5045).
- Grease** Dominion (01-410 6000).
- As an Inspector Calls** Apollo (01-494 5055).
- Lady Windermere's Fan** Albery (01-887 1115).
- Les Miserables** Palace (01-434 5055).
- Miss Saigon** Theatre Royal (01-494 5000).
- The Mousetrap** St Martin's (01-434 1431).
- North** Apollo (01-494 5070).
- Once on This Island** Apollo (01-494 5055).
- The Phantom of the Opera** Her Majesty's (01-494 5000).
- Shogun** Apollo (01-494 5055).
- Starlight Express** Apollo Victoria (01-494 5055).
- The Woman in Black** Fortune (01-832 2223).

Ticket information supplied by Society of London Theatre

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated with the symbol) on release across the country

AIRHEADS (15) Anarchic, good-natured rock 'n' roll comedy, with Steve Buscemi, Adam Carolla, John Goodman, and Joe Mantegna. Director, Michael Lemmon. MGM: Fulham Road (01-730 2636). Tricore (01-434 0031). UCI Whiteleys (01-730 3332).

CLEAN, SHAVEN Clever but grating exploration of schizophrenia from first-time director Lodge Kerrigan. With Peter Greene. ICA (01-730 3647).

FINAL CONNECTION (18) Inept thriller about an LA psychopath, with Michael Medved, Lisa Sime and Gary Stretch. Director, Nigel Dick. MGM: Pavilion Street (01-430 0331).

I LOVE TROUBLE (PG) Romantic comedy thriller that fails to match its vintage Hollywood models. With Julia Roberts and Nick Nolte. Director, Charles Shyer. MGM: Chelsea (01-352 5055). Odéon Kensington (01-434 0031). Swiss Cottage (01-434 0031). West End (01-434 0031). UCI Whiteleys (01-730 3332).

MY FAIR LADY (U) Reopened restored print of the 1964 musical, with Rex Harrison, Audrey Hepburn, and other familiar faces. Director, John Gielgud. With George C. Scott. MGM: Fulham Road (01-730 2636). Plaza (01-434 0031). UCI Whiteleys (01-730 3332). Warner (01-437 4343).

CURRENT

- THE ADVENTURES OF PRISCILLA, QUEEN OF THE DESERT** (15) Two drag queens and a transsexual get stuck in the Australian outback. Joyful and witty romp with Terence Stamp and Hugo Weaving. MGM: Chelsea (01-352 5055). Haymarket (01-434 0031). Tottenham Court Road (01-434 0031). Odéon Kensington (01-434 0031). Swiss Cottage (01-434 0031). West End (01-434 0031). UCI Whiteleys (01-730 3332). Warner (01-437 4343).
- THE BROWNING VERSION** (15) Solid, unspectacular version of Rattigan's play, with Albert Finney as the classic teacher facing retirement. With George C. Scott. MGM: Fulham Road (01-730 2636). Plaza (01-434 0031). UCI Whiteleys (01-730 3332). Warner (01-437 4343).
- THE CLIENT** (15) Unlikely version of John Grisham's thriller about a boy in jeopardy, with Susan Sarandon.

Tommy Lee Jones and Brad Pitt. Director, Joel Schumacher. MGM: Fulham Road (01-730 2636). Tricore (01-434 0031). UCI Whiteleys (01-730 3332). Warner (01-437 4343).

DREAM LOVER (18) James Spader discovers that his wife is not who he thought she was. Director, David Mamet. MGM: Fulham Road (01-730 2636). Tricore (01-434 0031). UCI Whiteleys (01-730 3332). Warner (01-437 4343).

FLESH AND BONE (15) Luscious tale of a young woman who falls for a man who is not who he seems to be. Director, John Dahl. MGM: Fulham Road (01-730 2636). Tricore (01-434 0031). UCI Whiteleys (01-730 3332). Warner (01-437 4343).

GERONIMO (15) Strangely dull account of the Apache warrior's capture from director Walter Hill. With Jason Patric, David Harbour, Robert Duvall and Wes Studi. MGM: Fulham Road (01-730 2636). Tricore (01-434 0031). UCI Whiteleys (01-730 3332). Warner (01-437 4343).

IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU (PG) Band comedy about a winning lottery ticket, with Nicolas Cage, Bridget Fonda and Rose Byrne. Odéon Kensington (01-434 0031). Swiss Cottage (01-434 0031). West End (01-434 0031). UCI Whiteleys (01-730 3332). Warner (01-437 4343).

THE LAST SEDUCTION (18) Explosive moral tale of sex, power and 5700,000, with Linda Fiorentino as the femme fatale to end them all. Director, John Dahl. MGM: Fulham Road (01-730 2636). Tricore (01-434 0031). UCI Whiteleys (01-730 3332). Warner (01-437 4343).

THE LION KING (U) African lion and his pride. Director, Roger Allers. MGM: Fulham Road (01-730 2636). Tricore (01-434 0031). UCI Whiteleys (01-730 3332). Warner (01-437 4343).

MARY SHEELLY'S FRANKENSTEIN (15) Unlikely, overdone, unimpressive look through the famous story. Director, Brian Koppelman.

COOL RUNNINGS

Buena Vista, PG, 1993
ADVENTURES of the Jamaican bobsleigh team in the 1988 Winter Olympics. No good looking for cinematic finesse or mature representations of Caribbean culture, but it is hard not to warm to the cast's boisterous teamwork on the film's sunny spirits. John Candy, larger than ever as a former Olympic champ down on his luck, gets his last good role coaching a team so inexperienced that they scarcely know what snow looks like. Available to rent.

BICYCLE THIEVES

Art House, U, 1948
"On your bike," said Lord Tebbit. But what do you do when your bike is stolen, and you can't do your job as a milkman? Vittorio De Sica's film, long hailed as a neo-realist classic, tugs at the heartstrings by letting the impoverished hero, scour Rome with his young son in tow, and never probes deeply behind the characters. But the street scenes jangle with life and you can see the start of a humanist tradition that leads all the way to *Cinema Paradiso* and the recent work of Gianni Amelio. Available singly, also in a boxed set with Faber's published screenplay.

LOST IN YONKERS

20-20 Vision, PG, 1993
THE smaller screen is the right place for Martha Coolidge's over-theatrical transfer of Neil Simon's comedy-drama about two boys learning about the human spirit in a wartime household governed by a grandma from hell. The cast gives good value (Irene Worth and Mercedes Ruehl repeat their Broadway roles), but the nostalgic brown hues get wearing, and when a scene ends, you half expect a curtain to fall. Available to rent.

THE POSITIVELY TRUE ADVENTURES OF THE ALLEGED TEXAS CHEERLEADER-MURDERING MOM

First Independent, 15, 1993
MICHAEL Ritchie's bizarre real-life tale of greed and

The Jamaican bobsleigh team grapple with the concept of snow in preparation for the Olympics in *Cool Runnings*

ambition, made for cable television, is good enough to beat the usual jinx on films with long titles, though you miss the bite Ritchie brought to earlier pieces of Americana such as *The Candidate*. Holly Hunter goes overboard with her accent but certainly convinces as a zealous mother so determined to see her daughter top cheerleader that she contemplates dispatching her rival to hospital, or Cuba, or even the mortuary slab.

HEART OF DARKNESS

Reflective, 15, 1993
JOSEPH Conrad's novella about human disintegration up the Congo has been dogging film-makers for years. Orson Welles wanted to make it his first film, while Francis Ford Coppola squeezed elements into *Apocalypse Now*. Now Nicolas Roeg has made a strangely stodgy version, released straight to video. The casting is partly to blame: Tim Roth gives a flat

rendition of Marlow, the man sent to secure the ivory hoard controlled by the trader Kurtz. Then, 70 minutes in, John Malkovich arrives, mouth agape, clutching folds of gauze, but his madman is much too mannered to chill the bones. Available to rent.

PLEIN SOLEIL

Lighthouse, PG, 1959
IN which the young and pretty Alain Delon parades his chest and assumes the identity of

the rich friend he does away with, all shot in the light, bright colours typical of Henri Decae's New Wave camera-work. René Clément's film, based on Patricia Highsmith's thriller *The Talented Mr Ripley*, is not taut enough to get the best of its story, but it is pleasingly decorative, and suffused with period flavour. Also known as *Blazing Sun* and *Purple Noon*.

GEOFF BROWN

The ghost of Christmas present

Microsoft still seems to be booming. This Christmas just about every major PC manufacturer has a relatively inexpensive "family" machine in its range, ready, theoretically at least, to run CD-Roms straight out of the box. Software is burgeoning to match, offering everything from super-realistic tank simulations to "adult" games to automated encyclopaedias and art courses. You might wonder if all this is worthwhile and you would be right. The number of non-games titles that really justify the use of multimedia is still fairly small. The potential is not lacking: the imagination is.

A British company is taking on the might of Microsoft for the Christmas CD-Rom market

point of obscurantism — its entries on television exclude any mention of John Logie Baird or the BBC's pioneering service. It is all the more agreeable, therefore, to find a much smaller company developing multimedia titles that can stand comparison with the might of Microsoft — and it is British.

Admittedly Media Design Interactive, founded in 1990, is working with

saving and first-aid course, a multimedia tour of London, and life-science programmes for all ages, ranging from *Butterflies of the World* and *Whales and Dolphins to Creeps*. *Crawflies*, which deals with characteristically challenged creatures such as flies and leeches.

MDI's newer titles, though, are exceptionally imaginative. *ITN World News '92* is a news archive for that entire year drawn from the ITN files, which

well integrated, and often immensely appealing — the lemmings are my favourites, and other species range from otters to rare Siberian tigers.

The company's latest programme is not so much life-science as post-mortem. Launched, appropriately, just after Halloween is *Ghost*, a survey of the supernatural imaginatively presented as a game. You explore a beautifully created "virtual" haunted house under the aegis of a ghost-hunting scientist, played by Christopher Lee at his most affably sinister, picking up files about famous hauntings and the like, watching interviews with victims and investigators — an unimpressive lot compared to Lee, and including one utter nutter — and winning access to more rooms and more information by solving the occasional clue or puzzle. The launch version ran rather clumsily and jerkily on my older computer, especially in marauding speech and image, but MDI is producing an upgrade for those who have this problem.

It is good fun, even for confirmed sceptics like me, a high-tech Christmas ghost story. Beat that, Microsoft.

MICHAEL SCOTT ROHAN

The *Hispaniola* lies rigged and ready in the harbour, with Long John Silver cooking up villainy on board. Come along for the ride

X hits the spot for a treasure

THE TIMES THEATRE CLUB

ROY Marsden stars as Long John Silver in the Mermaid Theatre's exciting new production of *Treasure Island*, the ultimate swash-buckling family adventure. The theatre and Robert Louis Stevenson's classic saga of sea, piracy and buried treasure go back a long way — Bernard Miles, who founded the Mermaid, was the quintessential Silver, fixed in the public's mind as the charming but ruthless villain in the galley of the *Hispaniola* — wooden leg, Captain Flint the parrot and all.

Miles was always a tough act to follow, and now Theatre Club members have the chance to see how Marsden — well-known for his role as Adam Dalgleish in the television series of P.D. James's murder mysteries — matches up to the Silver legend in this adaptation by Glyn Robbins.

Club members can buy the best available seats for £10 for Monday to Thursday performances between November 29 and December 8. To book, telephone 071-236 2211, quoting your membership number.

THIS WEEK'S SPECIALS

LONDON
Bloomsbury Theatre
Nov 29-Dec 2

- IN A week of contemporary dance under the title Fall Into Winter, Riccochet Dance Company and the Gandini Juggling Project perform on Tuesday and Wednesday, with the David Massingham Dance Company following on Thursday & Friday. Two tickets for the price of one (normal price £8). Telephone 071-388 8822.

Sadler's Wells

Nov 21, 22

- CANADA'S Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal mixes classical ballet and modern dance to music that ranges from the jazz of Oscar Peterson, Pat Metheny and Francois Bourasse to works by Maurice Ravel and Igor Stravinsky. Members can buy top-price tickets for £2.50 (normally £22.50). Tel 071-713 6000.

Wembley

Nov 25, 26

- CLIFF Richard is taking his greatest hits on tour, reaching Wembley Stadium next week. Stay at the five-star Radisson Edwardian Hotel at Heathrow with free parking and luxury coach transfer to

Roy Marsden is all set to buckle a right royal swash as Long John Silver in *Treasure Island* — see first item

Wembley, best seats for the show and full English breakfast the following morning for only £40 per person. If you do not wish to stay the night but would like to see the show, tickets are available with free parking and coach transfers for £25. Tel 0800 335588.

GLASGOW

King's Theatre
Nov 28-30

- RUSS Abbott brings back *CU Jimmy* for his only Scottish tour. Buy two tickets for the price of one (normally £10 and £12) and will receive a

complimentary programme. Tel 041-227 5511

YORK

Theatre Royal
Nov 30-Dec 2

- IN A world where the destiny of young women of beauty and wealth is marriage, Emma Woodhouse is proud of her independence. Vowing never to marry, she relishes matchmaking for others. Little does she realise that by meddling with fate, her own future could change. Adapted from the novel *Emma*. Jane Austen's heroine

MANCHESTER

The Green Room
Nov 24, 25

- ALFRED Jarro's *Ubu* is a hilarious and frightening play. Urged on by his rancorous, charmless and disloyal wife, Ubu decides his lot is not enough — so he kills King Wenceslas and seizes the throne of Poland. With the appeal of a monstrous pantomime baddie, the intellect of a sloth and the countenance of a road Ubu swaggers around Eastern Europe. Buy tickets for £3.50 (normally £6.50). Tel 061-236 1677.

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● VERY funny and very fast, the Posse's *Pinchy Kobi* and *the Seven Duppies* is very different to the usual Christmas musical or pantomime. The Posse's trademarks are live reggae, ragga, soul and calypso, plus plenty of audience participation. In a variation on the theme of *A Christmas Carol*, *Pinchy Kobi* is the Scrooge figure — a man with a bank full of money and a heart of stone. The Seven Duppies are souls trapped in limbo. The result of their meeting is an evening of pre-Christmas delight for all the family. The Posse's eight actors are all well-known faces from television series such as *EastEnders*, *London's Burning* and *The Real McCoy*. Club members can buy two tickets for the price of one at the following venues:

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ARTS

7

RECORDINGS: The German Lied between the wars; a safe pair of hands for Weber; the unacknowledged father of the big band

Hilary Finch

UNQUIET PEACE
The Lied between the Wars
Sieden/Sharp/Blair
Rock International
3-7086-2 HI**

COULD German Romanticism really survive the First World War? As an entertaining and illuminating companion to both London's Deutsche Romantik Festival and Decca's valuable and continuing EMI/EMI series, this cunningly programmed recital swivels between the nostalgic old guard (Pfitzner, Schoek and Richard Strauss) and the revolutionaries (Eisler, Weill and Zemlinsky) of the inter-war years.

In refreshingly upfront performances from the New York Festival of Song, Eisler's droll Brecht setting about watering gardens is juxtaposed with Strauss's "I wanted to make you a garland of flowers". Baritone William Sharp continues with Pfitzner's valedictory "Breath of Autumn", before the fresh-faced soprano Cyndia Sieden gives an irresistible performance of Weill's "The Muses of Margate", a prophetic satire on the international implications of the oil boom ("Shell, shell, shell", she cries).

Sieden is also responsible for an undeserved rarity, the 16-year-old Weill's five *Oymalieder*, passionate settings of a medieval Sephardic poet in an unabashed lyricism not to be excelled until his Broadway years.

SCHOENBERG/
KORNGOLD etc
Lieder

Kimrough/Baldwin
Koch Schwann 3-1094-2**
MORE "degenerate art", this time from a handful of Viennese composers, many of whom studied with Zemlinsky and fled to America in the early 1930s. Five of Schoenberg's early songs give this recital its musical and historical context; then come seven from his (understandably) little-known contemporary, Karl Weill, including a linked pair of Nietzsche settings in which Superman's world-weariness reaches its apotheosis. Steven Kimrough's dry baritone lacks the resonance

Vocal delights: the "irresistible" Cyndia Sieden, who is appearing in the ENO's *Ariadne on Naxos* at the Coliseum

ORCHESTRAL

Barry Millington

STRAUSS

Symphonia domestica/Till
Eulenspiegel/*Festliches
Präludium*
Philadelphia Orchestra/
Sawallisch
EMI CDC 5 55185 2**
WHETHER you regard the
Symphonia domestica, Rich-

ard Strauss's most graphic depiction of everyday life, as exhilaratingly imaginative or appallingly vulgar is a matter of taste. But to get the most out of this highly unusual work, it is as well to accept that Strauss was an irrepressible hedonist as well as an unparalleled sound portraitist.

Interestingly, it is not the love-making scene that has given most offence but the depiction of the infant Strauss's bathtime. In other words, it is the realistic effects that are the most difficult to stomach. Whether or not it is to do with Wolfgang Sawallisch's impeccable taste, this new recording makes its greatest impact in the more generalised passages, such as the love-making or the musical portraits of Strauss and his wife. It is not that his account lacks vivid detail: on the contrary, his handling and balancing of these formidably complex orchestral textures is never less than admirable. Rather it is a sense that this eminently sane, civilised conductor is in some way curbing the excesses of his hero.

The execution by the Philadelphia Orchestra, in these live recordings from the Suntory Hall, Tokyo, is scintillating, with some brilliant virtuoso playing in all departments, not least the brass. Of the two couplings, *Till Eulenspiegel* is given a similarly tasteful performance, while the *Festliches Präludium* raises the roof. Written to celebrate the opening of the newly built Vienna Konzerthaus in 1913, the latter, on account of the huge resources demanded (at least six stage trumpets, Strauss insisted), is rarely heard either in the concert hall or on disc.

OPERA

John Higgins

WEBER

Der Freischütz
Sweet/Ziesak/Seiffert/
Rydell/German Symphony
Orchestra, Berlin/Janowski
RCA 62538 2 (2 CDs)**
IN the opera house, *Freischütz* is a dodgy proposition even for the most inventive producer. The Wolf's Glen long ago lost the terrors of Weber's day. And then, quite apart from lengthy quantities of spoken dialogue, there are matters such as eagles plummeting from the heavens and bridal crowns turning into funeral wreaths. On disc, the imagina-

vigour and freshness which reflects the heart of *Freischütz*, a spooky tale of forest folk.

Peter Seiffert's Max does not overdo the gloom of the huntsman whose shooting has recently gone a bit wide of the mark. Seiffert is an up-front tenor with a clear, robust tone, and only the lower notes give him any trouble. Kurt Rydell's dark bass, with its keen cutting edge, makes him a top-drawer Kaspar, chief liaison officer for the powers of darkness. The only male weakness is Andreas Schmidt's ineffectual Prince Ottokar.

The Austro-German cast all handle their own spoken dialogue, and excellently too, but there is one foreign import, Sharon Sweet, the outstanding Turandot at Covent Garden recently, sings Agathe and hands over the words to a "double". The duplication is well worthwhile because Sweet negotiates the long and testing Act II aria, "Leise, leise", with a silken evenness of tone that many sopranos aspire to and few achieve.

At times Weber puts his singers out on their own with little orchestral support. Ruth Ziesak is well contrasted as Agathe's friend, Annschen, and makes this leather-pated character much more acceptable than usual.

The outstanding playing of the German Symphony Orchestra, especially from the wind section, puts this *Freischütz* in the front rank of modern sets. But those who are put off by the spoken dialogue and looking for something cheaper should consider DG's recent "economy" reissue of the 1960 Joachim *Freischütz* (439 717-2**). 2 CDs, no libretto).

CONTEMPORARY

Stephen Pettitt

LIGETI

Concertos for Cello, Violin and Piano
Queyras/Gawriloff/
Aimard/Ensemble
InterContemporain/Boulez
DG 439 808-2**

GYÖRGY Ligeti's textures and the structures they create strike ear and mind with impressive force and poetry, distorting time and sequence in a manner that resembles our way of randomly recalling and changing memories. It is challenging but compelling, multi-layered music. Deutsche Grammophon has added a distinguished disc containing the cello, piano and violin concertos to a recent and equally welcome offering from Sony Classical, a disc that included the piano, cello and chamber concertos. Sony's conductor was Peter Eötvös, the instrumentalists the excellent Ensemble Modern. But DG has the perfect conductor for the job and, on balance, its disc has to be preferred.

Pierre Boulez directs his own Ensemble InterContemporain in gritty but clearly articulated and carefully balanced performances. The acoustic is a touch dry, but not clinically so. All three soloists are given

mountains to climb. Pierre-Laurent Aimard triumphs in the cascades, lurching fragments and anarchically conflicting metres of the Piano Concerto (1985-88); Jean-Guillaume Queyras wraps the listener in beautifully coloured, isolated and boldly extended pitches in the earliest piece here, the extraordinary Cello Concerto of 1966; and Saschko Gawriloff garnishes the latest work, the Violin Concerto of 1990-92, with a ripe sound, full of vibrato, that adds a further layer of spice to the already compromised running systems Ligeti imposes.

JAZZ

Clive Davis

FLETCHER HENDERSON

A Study in Frustration
Columbia Legacy 57596
(3 CDs)**

WHO knows, if circumstances had been different, it might have been Fletcher Henderson rather than Benny Goodman



Henderson: lost potential

who made history. In the 1920s, it was Henderson who did so much to create the foundations of the modern big band, employing the finest soloists of his time. Yet a decade later, when the big-band era took flight across America, Goodman was the man to seize the opportunity.

By the time of his death in 1952, Henderson was still widely respected but by no means the dominant force that he had had the potential to become. Most of the 64 tracks on *A Study in Frustration*, a triple-CD compilation first issued more than 30 years ago, illustrate exactly why he and his players were once held in such high regard.

Riding on Don Redman's irrepressible arrangements, the orchestra brought distinction to almost everything it touched, from Jelly Roll Morton's "King Porter Stomp" to banal novelty tunes, and the detail in the section work is surely as sprightly as anything of its time.

POP SINGLES

David Sinclair

LIZ PHAIR

"Supernova"
Matador/Atlantic
7567 95831**

LIZ Phair is, by common consent, the new saviour of American rock'n'roll womanhood. Lifted from her second album, *Whip-Smart*, "Supernova" boasts a typically frank lyric celebrating her man's unusual prowess, harnessed to a wallowing guitar riff that bowls along with noisy, care-free charm. It is an upbeat song which should do much to broaden Phair's appeal beyond her hardcore fans.

POP ALBUMS

David Sinclair

NICK LOWE

The Impossible Bird
Demon/FIEND 757**

NO stranger to tales of heart-ache and usually armed with a good tune, Nick Lowe has tended in the past to coat his songs with a wry, ironic sheen, casting himself in the role of slightly distanced observer. But the tone of the songs on *The Impossible Bird* is much bleaker and more personal than that of his previous work.

"The Beast In Me" — the song he wrote for Johnny Cash — is typical of the soul-searching mood, while on a wistful, country two-step called "Where's My Everything?" he takes a middle-aged view of life as a catalogue of unfulfilled expectations.

But no matter how dark and occasionally bitter he gets, Lowe retains his sense of humour, and his songs are always blessed with an impeccably uplifting country-rock twang.

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OTHER WAY
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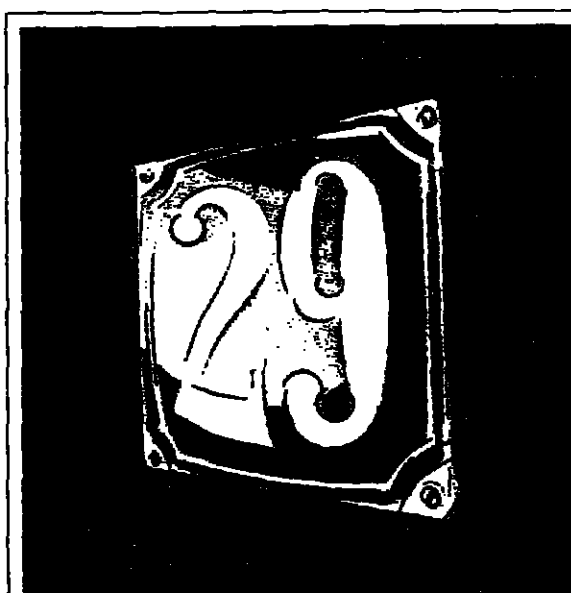
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Weber: spooky folk tale

reissued on Berlin Classics, 0011062, 2 CDs). He shows the same skills in *Freischütz*, lavishing equal care on the simplest peasant dances as on the sophisticated arias at which Weber was equally adept. Above all there is a



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SHOPPING

9

Cards that make a charity merry

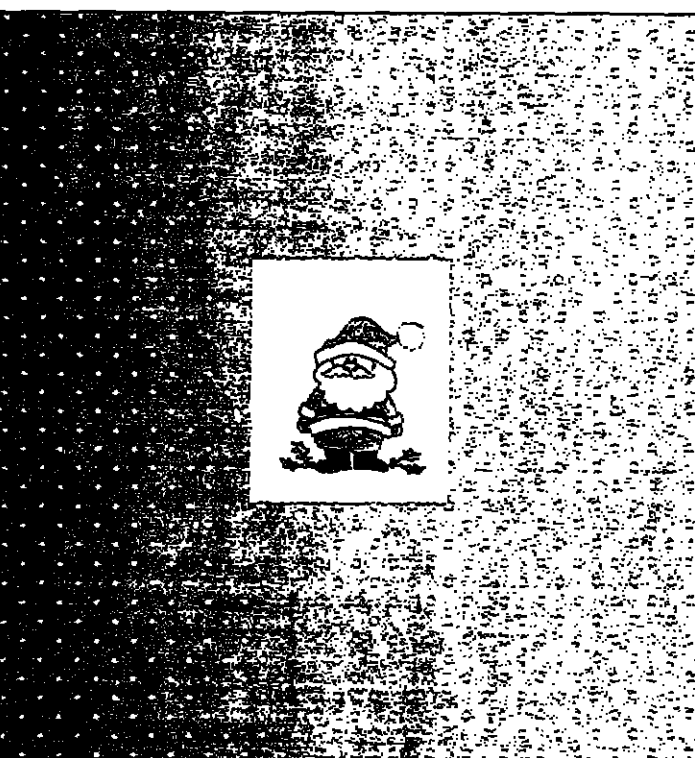
Guy Walters discovers who'll be sending what cards to whom this Christmas



David Attenborough, naturalist: "I'm a member of so many charities that I can pick and choose. I support the British Museum (right), the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and the Worldwide Fund for Nature. I send far too many."



Claire Rayner, agony aunt: "I spread my selection as wide as possible. My husband and I buy from catalogues — we send cards from Marie Curie Cancer Care, The Terrence Higgins Trust (left) and the NSPCC, among others. I belong to so many charities that it would be wrong to favour just one. We usually send about 400, and receive the same."



Jo Brand, comedian: "I was a psychiatric nurse for ten years so I have chosen this card from MIND (above). They try to normalise mental illness, and to educate people that those with mental health problems aren't running around with machetes all day. I send out about 100 cards each year, which I think I must have inherited from my mother, who manages to send about 300."



Emma Nicholson, Member of Parliament: "This year I shall mainly send the House of Commons Christmas card. However, I shall also send out cards by UNICEF (above), of which I am a board member. I send out about 1,000 cards a year; my husband sends a similar number. We shall be going to a family wedding in India this year, so we'll escape the deluge through our own letterbox."

Charity cards

- The British Museum sells packs of 16 cards for £5.75. From British Museum Mail Order, Chesham, Ely, Cambs CB8 1RY (0353 666390). There is a £2.95 postage and packing charge for orders up to £30.
- Marie Curie Cancer Care sells packs of five cards for £2.25 to £3.25, and packs of ten for £2.20 to £3.95. From Marie Curie Trading, Freeport, PO Box 72, Burton-upon-Trent, Staffs DE14 1BR (0283 506629).
- Terrence Higgins Trust sells packs of five cards for £2.20. From Christmas Cards, The Terrence Higgins Trust, 52-54 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8JY (071-831 0330).
- Scope sells packs of ten cards for £2.20 to £4.10, or bumper packs of 30 for £3.45 and 60 for £5.90. From the Scope Catalogue, Freeport, PO Box 66, Burton-upon-Trent, Staffs DE14 1BR (0283 506506).
- UNICEF sells packs of ten mini-cards for £2.45, or £5.75 for a pack of ten in the Prestige range. From UNICEF, Unit 1, Rignalls Lane, Chesham, Essex CM2 8TU (0245 478266).
- NSPCC sells packs of ten cards for £1.80 to £3.20, and a variety pack of 20 for £4.60. From the NSPCC, PO Box 39, Burton-upon-Trent, Staffs DE14 3LQ (0283 506202).
- National Autistic Society sells packs of ten cards for £2.20 to £4.40, and a variety pack of 15 for £2.20. From the National Autistic Society, 276 Willesden Lane, London NW2 5RB (081-415 1114).
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, sells packs of ten cards for £2.20 to £3.95, packs of 16 for £3, and a variety pack of 40 for £4.95. From the RSPB, PO Box 54, Burton-upon-Trent, Staffs DE14 3LQ (0283 506200).
- Worldwide Fund for Nature sells personalised packs of ten cards for £2.25, or packs of 20 for £2.50 to £3.95, and a bargain pack for £4.40. A wildlife selection of 24 cards costs £3.95. From Worldwide Fund for Nature, PO Box 49, Burton-upon-Trent, Staffs DE14 3LP (0283 506105).
- MIND sells packs of ten cards for £1.80 to £3.48, and 30 for £2.99, or a bumper pack of 30 for £2.99. From MIND, PO Box 81, Burton-upon-Trent, Staffs DE14 3LQ (0283 566311).
- All income from the direct sale of Christmas cards featured here goes wholly to the charity concerned.

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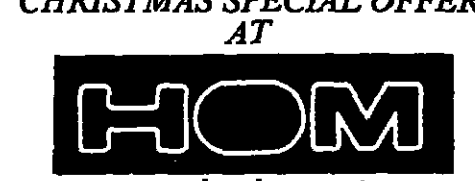
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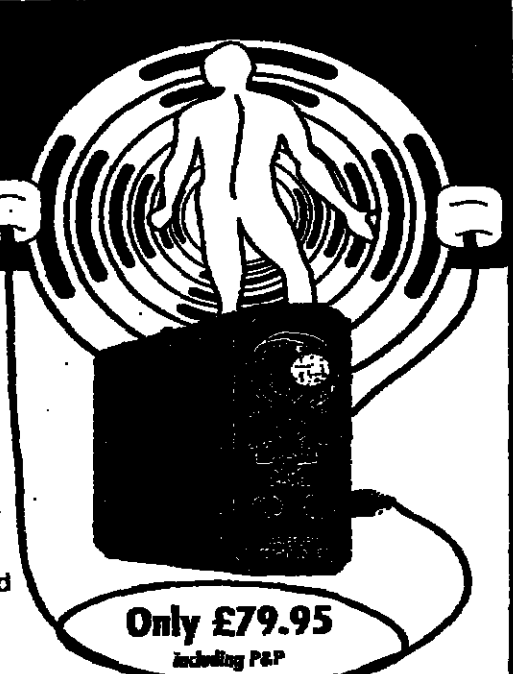
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7.

COLLECTING

13

A bonanza in Bakelite



Patrick Cook with a selection of figurines from his collection of about 7,000 plastic objects, amassed over the past 20 years

The course of Patrick Cook's life was set when, as a teenager, he saw an Ekco radio set in a shop in Bristol. "It was slightly Art Deco, with a fretwork willow tree in the middle," he says. "And it was made of Bakelite. Although I didn't realise what the material was, I was drawn to it and bought it."

Now, more than 20 years later, he has collected about 7,000 objects made of Bakelite, Bandalasta, Bois Durci, celluloid and other old plastics. "It's a hobby that's got out of proportion," says Mr Cook, who is a sculptor.

In the early 1970s, when he started collecting, few people were interested in old plastics. "I liked the idea of having a museum of undesirable objects, so I started collecting what everybody else thought was hideous," he says. By the late 1970s, his collection was large enough for him to open his first small museum. For the past few years, most of his collection has been in storage. And from next March it will be on public display in his new museum at an old watermill in Somerset.

Collecting plastics has become fashionable, and the range is wide.

Patrick Cook wants a Bakelite coffin — to complete his collection of plastic objects

It includes 19th-century materials such as shellac and gutta-percha, and later substances such as Bakelite. Early plastics were developed to imitate natural materials, such as ivory, tortoiseshell and jet, and the objects made of them are often as beautiful as those made of the real thing. Cream-coloured plastic, for instance, was carved by hand as though it were ivory.

Many early plastics were made of bizarre mixtures, says Sylvia Katz, the author of a number of books on the subject. "Casein, for instance, was made of the protein from milk, treated with formaldehyde. It produced a beautiful, iridescent effect. A lot of jewellery and pretty things were made of it."

Collectors who find an old plastic object need to identify what it is made of in order to care for it, but this is not always straightforward. "I could give you six objects made of black plastic and they could be made of six different substances," Ms Katz says. However, she suggests some intriguing methods of

identification. For instance, celluloid will give off a smell of camphor when rubbed against cloth. Bakelite, when wet, will smell of carbolic. And, she says, "If you set fire to a piece of plastic and get a whiff of burnt cheese, it's casein."

Phenol formaldehyde, the first totally synthetic plastic, was invented in 1907 by the Belgian-born American Leo Baekeland, and sold under the name Bakelite. Usually it was mixed with reinforcing substances, which gave it the dingy shades associated with the name, but the pure resin could be brightly coloured and was used for decorative items such as jewellery.

Bakelite is remembered far more than other trade names for plastics, which is why Mr Cook is calling his forthcoming fair of old plastics the Bakelite Fair. "The name conjures up a nostalgic feel," he says. "But there will be earlier objects on sale, along with later ones, such as Tupperware and melamine."

Those thinking of starting a collection will find it harder than when

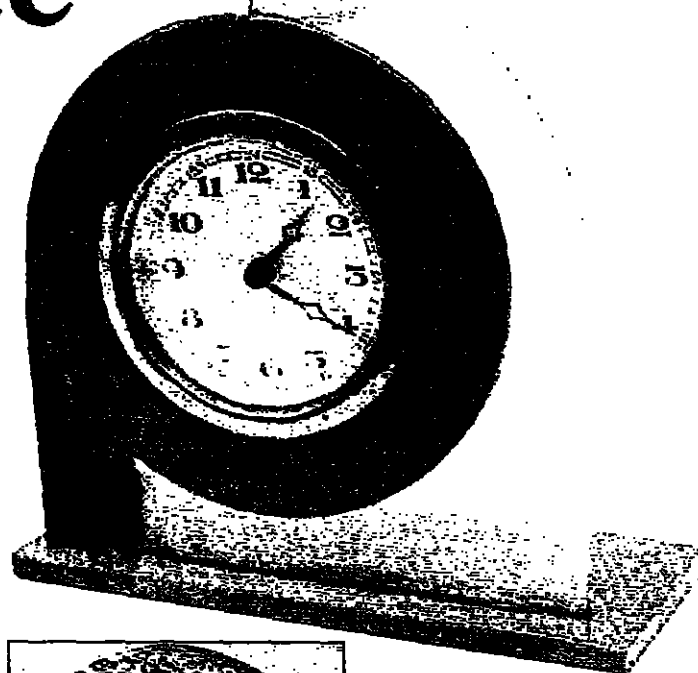
Mr Cook began. Gad Sassower, whose shop, Decadence, in Islington, north London, is one of the few specialising in old plastics, says: "It's much harder to find things: I buy from all over the world."

You can find examples of old plastics in jumble and car-boot sales because plastic designs were made in their millions. However, it is unlikely that something as sought after as the round Ekco AD65 radio designed in 1933 by Wells Coates, and worth £400-£600, will be found anywhere outside a specialist shop or fair.

The range of plastic objects made in the early part of the century is extraordinary, and Mr Cook's collection includes everything from the practical, such as vacuum flasks, to the useless, such as a finger-nail buffing machine.

There is one thing Mr Cook's collection lacks and which he would love to have — a Bakelite coffin. "About half a dozen were produced towards the end of World War Two with, I think, the thought they could be mass-produced," he says. "It sounds obnoxious, but for me it would be a prize specimen."

JULIA THRIFT



Fact file

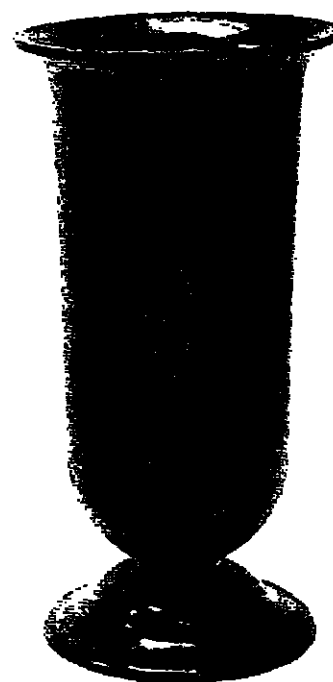
□ THE Bakelite Fair, Nov 26, Design Museum, Shad Thames (near Tower Bridge), London SE1 0JH (01-403 6933; 10am-6pm; £2.50, accompanied children free. The fair coincides with the exhibition "19th Plastic".

□ PLASTICS Historical Society, 11 Hobart Place, London SW1W 0HL (fax 071-823 1379).

□ ORCHARD MBI Bakelite Museum, Williton, Somerset TA4 4NS (0984 63213, opens in March 1995).

□ DECADENCE, 359 Upper Street, London N1 0PD (071-354 4473, open Wed and Sat).

□ BOOKS: *Bakelite*, by Patrick Cook and Gad Sassower (Apple Press, £12.95); *Classic Plastics*, by Sylvia Katz (Thames and Hudson, 1995); *Early Plastics*, by Sylvia Katz (Shire, £2.95).



Top: 1920s English Art Deco clock in celluloid, worth £50-£75. Above left: Latticed celluloid hair comb, possibly French, made in about 1910 (£85). Above right: One of a pair of Bakelite, circa 1928 (£120)

SALEROOM



PREVIEW

□ The late Hon. Mrs Victor Bruce was quite a "gal" during the 1930s, breaking 117 records for motoring, and circumnavigating the world by air and sea. On Monday Phillips in Bayswater sells many of her personal effects, including her log book (£100 to £150) and her flying goggles (£100 to £150).

□ A series of caricatures by the turn-of-the-century artist, Sir Max Beerbaum, enlivens Christie's Modern British paintings sale on Tuesday. One entitled *The Old and the Young Self* shows the artist's contemporary Walter Sickert — his old self in conversation with his young self (£2,000 to £3,000).

□ The glut of pennies produced in 1932 meant that only a handful were produced the following year. On Tuesday Spink hopes to break the previous auction record for a British "bronze" coin, of £16,500, with a 1933 penny, estimated at £22,000 to £24,000.

□ A volume of unknown drawings and sketches by Edward Lear could realise £6,000 to £8,000 at Christie's on Wednesday. Discovered among books bought at a jumble sale, they are thought to have been executed before the publication of Lear's first book *A Book of Nonsense*.

□ Bonhams is selling some 200 colour transparencies of rock and pop stars by the American rock photographer Bob Leach on Wednesday. Subjects include David Bowie, Elton John and Tina Turner (estimates, £200 to £300).

REVIEW

□ Two lavish soup tureens, which cost £500 in 1744, sold for £1.01 million at Sotheby's. Designed by the architect William Kent for the extravagant Baron Mordaunt of Cambridgeshire, each tureen weighs 16lb.

□ A collection of letters and photographs sent by Lewis Carroll to one of his small girl friends, Ella Monier-Williams, was sold by her grandson, the Right Rev John Bickersteth, retired bishop of Bath and Wells, for £29,672 at Phillips.

□ Bonhams, Montpelier Street, Knightsbridge, London SW7 0JH (071-353 3000), Christie's, 8 King Street, London SW1 0JH (071-839 9080); Phillips Bayswater, 10 Saleway Road, London W2 0JH (071-229 9090); Sotheby's, 35 New Bond Street, London W1 0JH (071-493 8080); Spink & Son Ltd, King Street, St James's, London SW1 0JH (071-430 7888).

CD DIRECT: Richard Morrison introduces this month's artist, the British violinist Nigel Kennedy, and four of his finest recordings

Laddish, loud and laudable

Surveying the strange and twisted career of Nigel Kennedy, one is reminded of Groucho Marx's quip: "I'm so old that I knew Doris Day before she was a virgin". There are plenty of people in the music business who knew Kennedy before he had mysteriously acquired his Cockney Lad accent. They recall that he once had perfectly middle-class vowels to go with his perfectly sheltered upbringing and perfectly genuine fledgling occupation as virtuoso violinist. And they wonder what peculiar psychological trait compels a man of nearly 40 to pretend to be something that he is not.

THE TIMES



CD DIRECT

In Britain, once you start questioning the integrity of somebody's accent, especially if they are faking working-class credentials, you are well on the way to total character assassination. Which is pretty well what has been unleashed on Kennedy in the past three or four years. That is a pity. He is the finest violinist Britain has produced since 1945. Listening to the four recordings we have selected is a journey in the company of a musical imagination of the highest order.

Yes, you can argue that Kennedy has brought much of the trouble on himself — but equally, the British musical establishment has been stuffy in its response to the violinist's more exotic ideas. "Unnecessary vulgarity," sniffed the then head of Radio 3, John Drummond, about Kennedy's

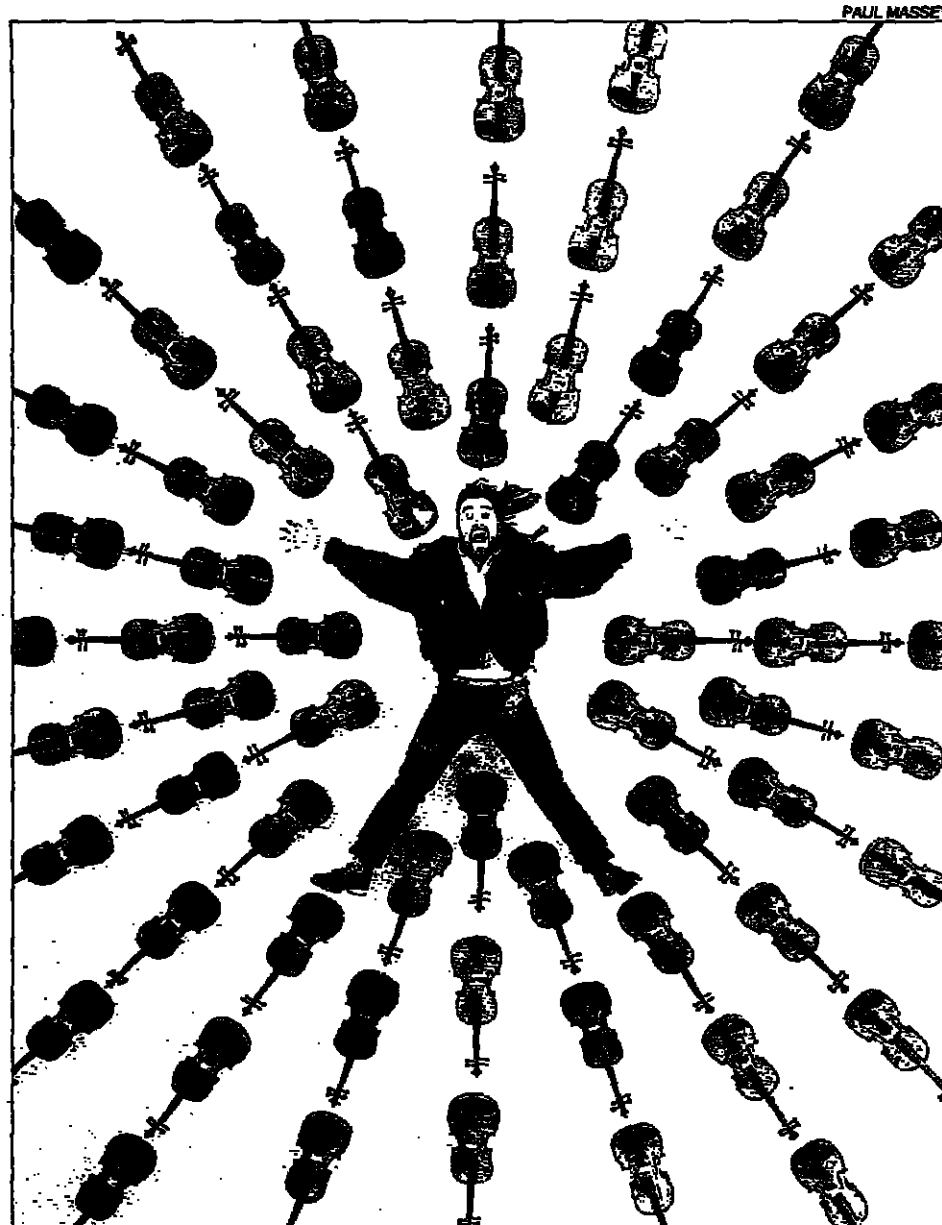
clothes. "You just can't do *The Four Seasons* like that," said a scandalised Sir Simon Rattle about Kennedy's now famous recording, with its flamboyant, sub-Hendrix sound effects. Oh, come on, Simon, it isn't as if there is a scarcity of "normal" *Four Seasons* in the catalogue.

Where did it all start to go peculiar for Kennedy? According to the violinist's own writing (which, like his conversation, is nothing if not colloquial) he was initially "screwed up" by his years in the boardinghouse of the Menuhin School. Already he was marked out as a boy wonder — a latter-day Menuhin, in fact — and a camera crew followed him through the years when he should have been growing up in the company of girls, ciggies and cider.

His time at the equally pressurised Juilliard School in New York was hardly the required antidote. At 20 he knew an awful lot about violin playing, and awfully little about himself. You do not have to be a psychologist to see that many of the behaviour patterns he has since adopted — the boyish attachment to Aston Villa, the affected street slang of 20 years ago, the hero-worship of Jimi Hendrix, the desire to shock a paternalistic musical establishment by wearing Rocky Horror outfits to the Festival Hall — are all signs of a man living his teenage years a little late.

And in the full glare of the tabloids, too. When he unbuttoned his trousers on a Saturday morning kids' television show, he was probably being playful, just as he was when he turned up for a concert performance of the Berg Violin Concerto (one of the most deadly serious works in the repertoire) dressed like a Gothic vampire kitted out by Oxfam. But he merely handed ammunition to his enemies.

Then there was his temporary, but nevertheless image-damaging, pact with the erstwhile manager of the Bay



Enfant terrible: Nigel Kennedy is "the finest violinist Britain has produced since 1945"

City Rollers, one John Stanley. For a season or two in the late 1980s it seemed as if Kennedy would not even take the fiddle out of its case unless Stanley gave the OK. Stanley brought him quick bucks through slick marketing — and EMI, the record company that had nurtured Kennedy since childhood, seemed oddly content to allow one of its most prized assets to be packaged like a "here today, gone tomorrow" punk guitarist.

But the episode damaged Kennedy's credibility even further in the eyes of the constituency that, ultimately, will matter most to him: the loyal, classical-music public. Every time he indulged in "antics", belief in the integrity of his playing faded a little bit more. That is unfortunate, because Kennedy's playing, miracu-

lously, has remained as lovely as ever. When, two years ago, he announced that he was "retiring" from playing concerts in public to concentrate on his rock and jazz work, I felt a genuine sense of loss. There are few enough violinists on the circuit who are prepared to take a risk in public, to be spontaneous with their treatment of the music, to allow their feelings to come into play. Kennedy did all of that and more. On his day (it was not always his day, of course), he was as compelling a performer as I have heard.

His tone is not big, and neither — despite his larger-than-life image — are his musical gestures. In many ways he is the epitome of English reticence, which is why his Elgar and Walton playing is peerless among

today's violinists. But within these parameters his sense of phrase and nuance is delightful. There is real joy in his music-making, and a notable absence of affectation, too. That comes as no surprise to those who knew Kennedy's playing before he became Nige the Monster. But to people who come to Kennedy via "the image", the sudden confrontation with a real musician of immaculate taste and breeding must be rather shocking. These discs reveal that musician. If Kennedy sticks to his word and never plays another concert in public (and I sincerely hope he changes his mind), then the recordings become an even more important reminder of what this mixed-up, infuriating but beautifully gifted musician could do.

GREAT CLASSICS ON OFFER

● TO PURCHASE any of these top-price EMI CDs of Nigel Kennedy's performances, at the specially reduced *Times* price of £11.99, complete the booking form (below). You can also receive an extra CD free when you order two or more of the recommended items.

Brahms Violin Concerto
Nigel Kennedy, London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Klaus Tennstedt
TT19401

Brahms's concerto is one of the great 19th-century masterpieces. It is both an epic challenge and a fundamental pillar of any virtuoso violinist's repertoire. Nigel Kennedy's performance is Romantic in the best sense — strong, emotional and searching. What's more, he teams up here with the charismatic German conductor Klaus Tennstedt, whose concerts have been among the highlights of recent London seasons. Tennstedt, plagued by ill health for several years, has just announced his retirement from concert life, making superlative recordings such as these even more important a legacy of his genius.

Vivaldi: The Four Seasons
Nigel Kennedy, English Chamber Orchestra
TT19402

The record catalogues list more interpretations of *The Four Seasons* than any other orchestral work — but Kennedy's performance (one of the most popular classical discs of all time) is unlike anyone else's. He treats the music not as some precious piece of Baroque esoterica, but as a full-blooded testament to the Italian temperament. He also decorates some scenes with "sound effects". To some, he is taking unpardonable liberties; to others, he is bringing out latent colours that are already hinted at in the score. Vivaldi might well have enjoyed them: after all, in these four concertos (written by the "Red Priest" in 1725) he used every trick in the 18th-century fiddler's book to suggest the unpredictability of Nature.

Walton Violin Concerto, Viola Concerto
Nigel Kennedy, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by André Previn
TT19403

The viola is a larger but less penetrating instrument than

the violin, and the fingering is different, so string players tend to play one or the other. But virtuosos do occasionally break the rule, and here is Kennedy — a dedicated and incorrigible rule-breaker — doing just that in two outstanding 20th-century concertos. Walton had a gift for fine, memorable melodies, and there is something quintessentially English about the lyricism in these two concertos, which Kennedy captures to perfection.

Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto
Nigel Kennedy, London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Okko Kamu
Rococo Variations
Northern Sinfonia conducted by Yan Pascal Tortelier
TT19404

Written at about the same time as Brahms's concerto, and in the same key (D major), Tchaikovsky's equally cele-

brated work is very different in character and requires a soloist who can make its stunning melodies sing with feeling. Kennedy brings a rare panache and brilliance to the task. The Violin Concerto is coupled here with a "miniature concerto" for cello and orchestra, performed by the superb Paul Tortelier.

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The talent is there if we care to spot it

Britain is bursting with dedicated new writers, burning to get into print, says Giles Gordon

There is a stirring in the land of ardent writers. In the past fortnight I have talked to two groups of authors — the Kent Literary Society at Maidstone, and a postgraduate English class at Manchester University taught by poet and publisher Michael Schmidt (he runs Carcanet) — and attended the sixth annual Ian St James Awards ceremony at the London Hilton on Park Lane. What these present at these three disparate events had in common was twofold. First, a genuine bewilderment as to what is going on in the world of publishing when novels by the likes of Naomi Campbell and Martina Navratilova and other "celebrities" seem to be preferred to those by professional or would-be professional writers, those striving to succeed at their favoured art form. Second, a sincere and committed desire to write well enough to have their books published.

It used to be a chore for agents, publishers and mid-level successful writers to stump the country providing encouragement if not patronage to earnest, struggling writers, desirous of being published rather than of writing something worthwhile and original. In the past few years, standards have risen hugely, as those confronted daily with unsolicited manuscripts will acknowledge. Fiction is more technically accomplished today than ever before.

There in the front row at Maidstone was Rona Randall, hardly an *ingénue* author. And at the Hilton was John Trenhaile, whose twelfth novel has just been published. At Manchester they wanted to know how do you get published these days when it obviously has little to do with the quality of the writing?

It used to be said that Ian St James, a grizzled novelist himself, set up his awards for short stories by writers who

had not published novels in the desperate hope that his own books would receive more notice. At the start, then, his awards were something of a joke. How we all laughed behind our hands, how superior we all were.

But, like George Foreman, the Ian St James Awards have kept coming each year, and they have certainly won through to become an annual occasion to celebrate, to the vast credit of St James. HarperCollins has just published *Brought to Book* (£5.99), a collection of the 16 winning short stories. The volume is measurably stronger than in previous years. Mike McCormack, who won with a gritty and abrasive

overexcited, Doughty, whose first novel comes out in January, is described in the hand-out for next year's award as "the well-known novelist".

It was announced by Merric Davidson, who administers the awards, that representatives of Britain's 12 largest publishing houses were at the lunch, and also 12 literary agents. Wow! The latter looked ashen-faced and twitchy, with eyes darting from table to table, each sizing up the shortlisted authors present, desperate to sign up the writers of tomorrow. Some, like football managers, had already taken on the most promising and were smotheringly protective of their clients.

As I sat down, I asked the lady sitting next to me if she was a prizewinner. She turned out to be the mother of my client Stephanie Elyne, who was among the finalists for the second time and whose novel is three-quarters finished. She knows how good it has to be.

The day after my evening at Maidstone, the committee member who had made all the arrangements sent me a copy of her slim volume of poems. At Maidstone, she had been too bashful to mention that she had been published. And the winner of this year's Kent Literature Festival short-story competition told me that the *London Magazine* had just accepted a story by him.

All this is the real world of writing, the next lot pushing at the door, bemused but unpersuaded by metropolitan cynicism and sycofanity. It is easy to underestimate, even write off the subfusc world of writers' circles and to regard those who give their time to talking to them as merely paying their dues. Many, if not most, earned their spurs similarly. The world of authorship is, with few exceptions, an invigoratingly unselfish one, eager to find and acclaim new talent.

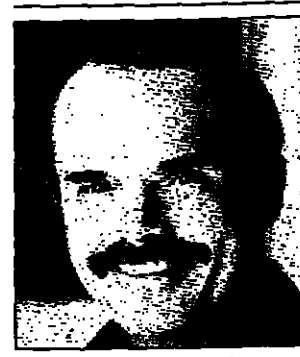
6 Fiction is more technically accomplished today than ever before



Dancing queen: from *Girls!*, 31 postcards from the James Gardiner collection (Fourth Estate, £6.99). A companion volume of cartoon postcards, *Arts Brevis* by Chris Garratt and Mick Kidd, is also available

Death stalks by modem

Peter Millar on a techno-thriller only a few pixels ahead of today



Koonitz: a chilling lesson

DARK RIVERS OF THE HEART
By Dean Koonitz
Headline, £16.99

The forte of this book's plot is that when, inevitably, the enigma surrounding the nebulous organisation pursuing Grant — while he pursues a waitress met one night in a bar — starts to recede, the suspense is actually tightened by the emergence of a dark

IT IS one of the oldest human fears, the most persistent waking nightmare: to be pursued for no reason by an implacable enemy that is both faceless and merciless.

Add a twist of technology on the cusp between today and tomorrow, an aesthetic psychopath or two, and you end up with a plot that looks like *North by Northwest* laced with *Lethal Weapon* and a cast straight from *Silence of the Lambs*. That is what Dean Koonitz has laid on in *Dark Rivers of the Heart*, a book that manages the contortist trick of being by turn chilling, sickening and funny.

As light relief in a world where killers think they are artists and artists turn out to be serial killers, the humour walks on four legs in the person — well, almost — of an engagingly anthropomorphic dog. Like most of the other characters in this book, he is traumatised by his past. Named Rocky — "to boost his confidence" — this canine anti-hero is a neurotic wreck who only sheds his cowering timidity when on the front passenger seat of a four-wheel-drive travelling dangerously fast in the chase sequences. He has, as his master, Spencer Grant, explains, "a need for speed".

sub-plot from his own past. A sinister web of power, lust and perversion binds the psychotic killer hunting him down to the traumatic childhood murder of his mother.

The technology of Koonitz's world is only a few pixels ahead of today, yet well on the way to the semi-surreal near-future universe inhabited by William Gibson's characters in his cyberspace series. But this is no science fiction — except in the sense that it is fiction littered with the products of science.

A world of interlinked databases accessible by laptop terminals connected to mobile phones, and available to internet-literate hackers is already upon us. What matters is what you do with it. And the answer, unfortunately, seems to be: whatever you can. If Koonitz has a chilling lesson to preach, it is that future morality may depend on moral parity; and if you don't know what that means, then tomorrow definitely does not belong to you.

Ronald Reagan elevated to the status of presidential maxim the movie motto, "You can run but you can't hide". This is a novel based on the fearful premise that he might be right.

Three go in search of adventure

CONSCIOUS that travel writing is an endangered genre in a world where even the wildest places are only an aeroplane ride away, these books adopt very different approaches. Ronson opts for cynicism; Middleton is politically and racially conscious; and Allen chooses his favourite role — that of 19th-century explorer.

Ronson, with his stated intention of wanting to "discover a place where everyone was nice to each other and said urbane and scintillating things as in David Niven movies", recklessly abuses his position as a journalist to cage free rooms, meals and even a passage on the *QE2*. Yet, despite travelling through South America, Czechoslovakia and America, his outlook remains blinkered and metropolitan. A former columnist on London's

CLUBBED CLASS
By Jon Ronson
Pavilion, £9.99

KALASHNIKOV AND ZOMBIE CUCUMBERS
By Nick Middleton
Sindclair-Stevenson, £15.99

THROUGH JAGUAR EYES
By Benedict Allen
HarperCollins, £18

listings magazine, *Time Out*, he is well versed in the ludicrousness of celebrity — Claire Rayner and Marie Helvin dressing up as waitresses at a fundraising do — but, in the main, his cynicism leaves little room for wonder or the celebration of difference.

Middleton occupies the other extreme. A teacher, geographer and traveller of some sensitivity, he views

Mozambique largely through the eyes of aid workers and frustrated expatriates. While this is important — more than 70 per cent of the country's gross domestic product is foreign aid — and while he brings their pettinesses vividly to life, it is only half the picture. The narrative does not pick up until he ventures off into the countryside alone.

Through Jaguar Eyes is Allen's fourth book, and follows his established pattern. As with its predecessors, it begins in England as our hero's family and friends do their best to dissuade him from undertaking what they see as a reckless and unnecessary expedition. Undeterred, the brave adventurer sets off for South America, where he plans to ride the Amazon from source to mouth.

In doing so, he is shot at by cocaine

dealers and wonders, at tedious length, whether he will escape the jungle alive. He makes the mistake of constantly unbundling himself of even the most trivial details — fearing his mother's disapproval, for instance, should she discover that he abandoned wearing underpants to ward off croch rot.

He is a more responsive writer than Middleton or Ronson and vividly captures the danger of the jungle, its immensity, and the possibility of an attack by cayman or jaguar. But in the end there is too much Allen and too little of the cultures through which he passes. This is no mistake — the first book listed in the "best bibliography" is his own self-obsessed Amazonian travelogue, *Mad White Giant*.

EDWARD MARRIOTT

THE TIMES Special readers offer

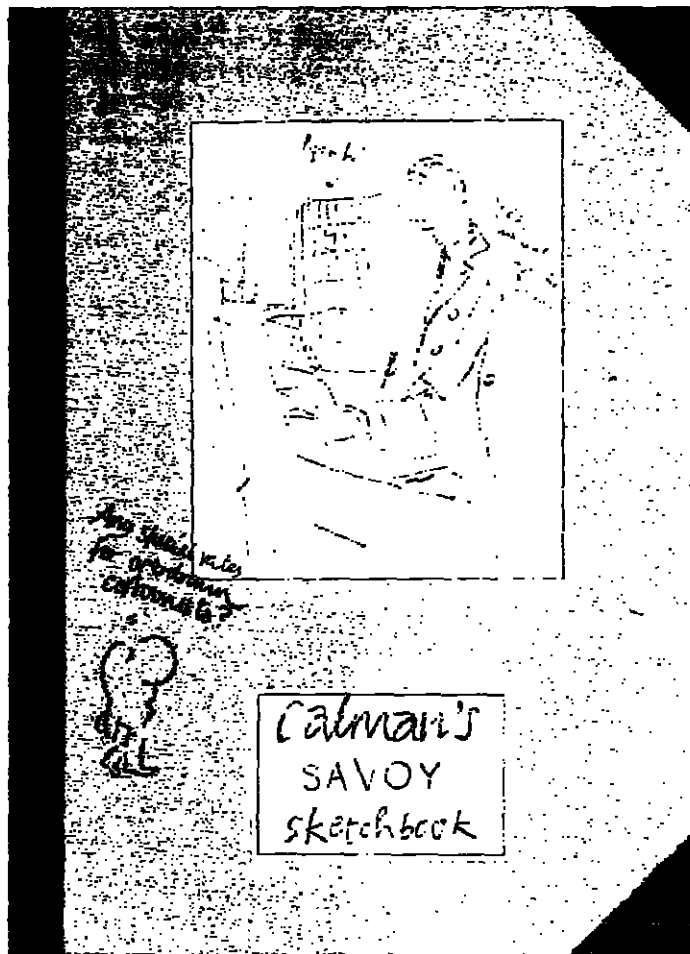
Calman's Savoy Sketchbook

Specially published in a limited edition to commemorate his work. Mel Calman's view of London's most famous hotel is a unique look inside an extraordinary world. Its inhabitants range from chef to chambermaid, from glamorous guests to humble toast makers. To capture them, Calman braved noise, frenzy and protocol to produce this enchanting insight in his own revealing style and, of course, with his own sharp humour.

Calman, drew for the front page of *The Times* for 15 years until his death in February of this year. He opened Britain's first cartoon gallery in 1970 and helped establish the National Museum of Cartoon Art.

The Savoy Sketchbook was his last project, in progress at the time of his death. Its delightful style and, indeed, Calman himself, can be summed up no better than in Michael Palin's introduction to the book: "...affectionate, revealing, entertaining... a celebration of a great institution and a reminder of Mel Calman's humour, humanity and inimitable powers of observation."

Copies of this book are available to readers of *The Times* for only £7.99 including post and packaging. To order your copy simply complete the coupon on the right. Please note that while every effort will be made to ensure delivery in time for Christmas, depending on demand this cannot be guaranteed.



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Always quick on the draw

MEL Calman died suddenly earlier this year. He had been the pocket cartoonist for *The Times* since 1979. The front page of this newspaper will never be quite the same without his daily observations, nor for that matter will our office in the design department.

Mel was inhibited by vast areas of blank paper, so he would rummage for scraps of off-white newsprint and draw quickly with stubby, soft pencils. He adjusted to the new world of computers, but it was not the same for him. His cartoons would still show a typewriter, and his phone boxes stuck adamantly to the original design.

He has left many wonderfully humorous books, this

CALMAN'S SAVOY SKETCHBOOK
By Mel Calman
Aster Design, £7.99

latest being a celebration of the Savoy Hotel. All aspects of the Savoy, upstairs and downstairs, are recorded with witty drawings and captions. Michael Palin provides a joyful introduction, remembering the many magical moments he shared with the author.

Mel adored the Savoy. It represented to him all the fine things in life: well prepared food, craftsmanship and an old-fashioned politeness. He was made to feel wanted.

DAVID DRIVER

Calman book offer, see left



In the kitchens at the Savoy

The Times/Dillons Bestsellers

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4	INTERESTING TIMES Terry Pratchett (Gollancz)	£14.99	8	2	
5	ORIGINAL SIN P. D. James (Faber)	£14.99	4	4	
6	MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY Ian Botham (Collins Willow)	£15.99	5	9	
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8	FLASHMAN AND THE ANGEL OF THE LORD George MacDonald Fraser (Harvill)	£15.99	0	1	
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PAPERBACK					
1	MEN AT ARMS Terry Pratchett (Corgi)	£4.99	0	1	
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4	100 RECIPES IN NO TIME AT ALL Annetta Rice (BBC)	£4.99	1	5	
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6	FIRES OF HEAVEN: BOOK FIVE: WHEEL OF TIME Robert Jordan (Orbit)	£5.99	13	2	
7	CALVIN & HOBBS: HOMICIDAL JUNGLE CAT Bill Watterson (Warner)	£7.99	4	4	
8	NIGHTMARES & DREAMSCAPES Stephen King (NEL)	£5.99	5	4	
9	JEDI ACADEMY SERIES VOL 3: CHAMPIONS OF THE FORCE Kevin J. Anderson (Bantam)	£4.49	0	1	
10	PADDY CLARKE HA HA HA Roddy Doyle (Mandarin)	£5.99	8	24	
11	LIFE AND HOW TO SURVIVE IT Robin Skynner & John Cleese (Mandarin)	£5.99	10	4	
12	THE ROBBER BRIDE Margaret Atwood (Virgo)	£5.99	6	3	
13	MIDNIGHT IS A LONELY PLACE Barbara Erskine (HarperCollins)	£4.99	19	2	
14	MRS DE WINTER Susan Hill (Mandarin)	£5.99	16	4	
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16	GOLDEN STRAW Catherine Cookson (Corgi)	£4.99	11	6	
17	DELIA SMITH'S CHRISTMAS Delia Smith (BBC)	£5.99	15	5	
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Derwent May reviews the critics

Pleasure ratings are awarded to a maximum of five. Column centimetres indicate the length of reviews to date in national broadsheet newspapers

4.5 Tadpole truths: The new book by the American novelist Lorrie Moore, *Who Will Run the Frog Hospital?* (Faber, £14.99), is about two 15-year-old girls, Berie and Sils, whose happy youth in New York among frogs both real and metaphorical does not, unfortunately, leave them married to princes.

The men on the book pages enjoyed it as much as the women. "An elegy for teenage kids," wrote Tibor Fischer in the *Financial Times*. "...superb one-liners and a great gift for creating mood". In *The Spectator*, John Whitworth said he loved it — it was "poised, witty", and like Beryl Bainbridge, "plays the faun-half card for all it's worth".

In *The Independent* on Sunday, Joan Smith called it "a marvellous novel" about "the inevitability of disappointment". In *The Sunday Telegraph*, Katie Owen said it was "a bitter-sweet elegy for lost love" by "one of America's most brilliant writers about women". In *The Observer*, Kate Kellaway reported rapturously that "one exclaims at her writing as one might over a piece of watered silk" and that the book was "as easy to read as a dandelion clock is to blow".

Finally, in *The Sunday Times*, the princely Nick Hornby declared to his readers: "Here is an immensely likeable writer whose fan-base in this country seems inversely small: if I see this novel remastered, I shall hold you all personally responsible". Col cms: 229

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BOOKS

15

He means it, man

Punk's not dead
while Tony
Parsons's wild
enthusiasm is
still in print



The Sex Pistols on stage: Tony Parsons's writing from 1976 keeps their memory alive

DISPATCHES FROM
THE FRONT LINE OF
POPULAR CULTURE
By Tony Parsons
Virgin, £15.99

WE are now all expected to be passionate about some aspect of popular culture. Seats on the *Late Show* and columns in supplements are routinely reserved for those who can muster the type of unqualified enthusiasm for Arsenal or Suede which might previously have seemed inapplicable when applied to the collected works of Shakespeare.

Nobody has done more in the area of popular music to license such enthusiasm than Tony Parsons. He was only 18 when he was appointed to the *New Musical Express* in the mid-1970s but immediately set about describing the leading bands in the new punk movement with an affection and assurance which made previous analysts of the pop and rock music scene seem downright timorous.

If you want to enjoy this music, Parsons shouted in your ear above the din, then throw away your inhibitions and your higher education: "Forget all that obscurantist artistic minimalism crapola. Did you need an Oxford dictionary to read *Spider Man*? A BA to enjoy the Ronettes? An NUS card to chew on a cheeseburger? The musical brain surgery of *The Ramones* is there to be enjoyed."

It may be nearly 20 years since the Sex Pistols, the Clash and the Damned were exercis-

ing Britain's bishops, television interviewers and moral entrepreneurs, but it is hugely to Parsons's credit that the pieces about them which he wrote on the run still do more to evoke their musical and aesthetic impact than anything written since that time. In this relativistic age, it is also wonderfully refreshing to encounter his no-nonsense absolutism. "When the Clash put hand-slashed slogans on their family-created urban battle fatigues such as 'Hate and War', it's not a cute turn-around of a flowery spiel from

ten years ago — it's a brutally honest comment on the environment they're living in." So there.

Parsons is a fan who can write. Nearly every rock star he meets turns out to be nicer than even he expected. "Springsteen... often appears too good to be true. You look for the catch, the flaw, the giveaway. And you look and you look and you keep looking until you finally concede that there isn't a catch. He's the one." Brett Anderson of Suede turns out to be "friendly, self-deprecating and down to earth", and "nobody comes close to Bowie. Nobody ever will." No wonder so many interviewers open up their hearts to him: even harassed rock stars can tell the differ-

ence at 20 paces between real fans and clever dicks.

Time may have moved Parsons from the *NME* to *The Daily Telegraph* to comment on class and gender relations with the type of certainty which he once, and more appropriately, reserved for Johnny Rotten and Iggy Pop. But his wonderful enthusiasm has not so much drained away as been redirected.

Even if nowadays he is more likely to be found marvelling at Milan's Gothic cathedral or Houston's soaring skyscrapers than the set for *Ziggy Stardust*, he still tugs at your hand with all the endearing insistence of a small boy running towards the sea.

LAURIE TAYLOR

Merry glint of pure gold

Brian Alderson on the Whitbread
Children's Novel Award winner

THE voyage out to South America is not frequently taken by English children's writers. True, the pampas and the Amazon figured among the travel plans of Victorians such as Henry and Ballantyne — but they went everywhere for their stories. In more recent times the place has only featured in extravaganzas such as Joan Aiken's *The Stolen Lake* or in appeals to save the rain forest.

Gold Dust (for children aged 11-14) changes all this. The setting is an up-country village: Serra Vazia. The central characters are the local residents: Mr da Souza, who keeps a drugstore, and his children, Inez and Maro; their school teacher, Senhora Ferretti, a diva *mangueira*; the priest; the local radical; and assorted layabouts. The story emerges gradually as Serra Vazia's apparently exhausted gold deposits are found not to be so and hordes of gold-diggers arrive and proceed to dig up the town.

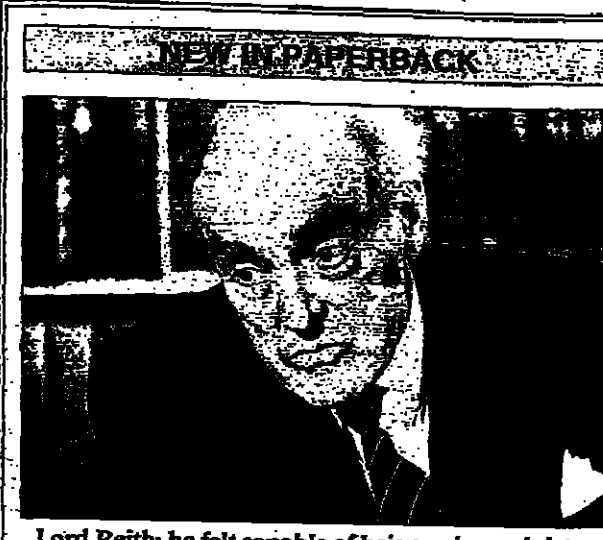
Critics have seen the resultant tale as an attack on greed and exploitation, and in a backhanded way this may be true. The *garimpeiros* who arrive create total havoc, which is by no means subdued by the variously venal army, police, and media people.

A heavy-handed tractarian could do a lot with that. But Geraldine McCaughrean is altogether more dispassionate and has a lighter touch than such writers, and her book is first and foremost a comedy. The townspeople — so preoccupied at first with the small events of their humdrum existence, and then so overwhelmed by the goldrush — are drawn with an affectionate humour. The slow-building climax when La Senhora and the children finally save the day, is a mixture of high drama and farce. Even the greedy *garimpeiros* seem to be figures of fun, and one is more inclined to laugh than to be shocked when one of them, busily undermining a house, takes a pot shot at the protesting radical.

■ GOLD DUST
By Geraldine McCaughrean
Oxford University Press, £9.99

The winner of the Whitbread Children's Novel Award, *Gold Dust* unquestionably deserves its prize. I have no idea whether it is authentic or not — and its author claims never to have set foot in Brazil — but it reeks of something that ought to be authentic and its humane humour dives deeper than the brittle satire of its chief competitor, Jan Mark's *They Do Things Differently There*.

This year, the Whitbread Children's Novel Award is sponsored by the company's subsidiary, Beefeater, and the winning book will be promoted through its restaurants. It is hoped that this will help to show young gourmets that children's fiction can be meatier than they expect, and that indeed, as Father Ignatius says in the book, fiction has to do with real life, for it was a fiction that saved their town.



Lord Reith: he felt capable of being prime minister

■ THE EXPENSE OF
GLORY: A Life of John Reith
By Ian McIntyre
HarperCollins, £8.99

John Reith, the BBC's first Director General, was temperamentally destined to be miserable throughout his life. Gloomily introspective, impossibly demanding and permanently obsessed with a sense of his own unfulfilled potential, he was incapable of contentment.

By the time this extraordinary man died in 1971, he had confided more than two million angry, honest, passionate and revealing words in his diaries, which (though published in heavily edited form in 1975) lay closely guarded in the BBC's Written Archives Centre until Ian McIntyre became the first biographer to be given the run of them. The man who emerges from his fascinating biography is as tragic and

preposterous as he is gifted. The most surprising section of the book concerns Reith's ten-year love-affair with Charlie Bowser, a young man seven years his junior, which ended, very bitterly, when they both married. His subsequent hatred for Bowser and his wife "Joey" is equalled only by his hatred of the "the miserable Clarendon" (the BBC's first Chairman, the "Whore of Babylon" (Ethel Snowden), one of the Board of Governors), his daughter Marista (who she marries against his will), Churchill, and virtually all his successors at the BBC.

Yet the man had charm and vision, as well as brilliant organisational abilities. He felt he was capable of being prime minister, and if he hadn't wasted so much energy on feuds and grudges, he might have got there.

■ HOME TRUTHS
By Sara Maitland
Sceptre, £5.99

A reunion in the Scottish Highlands brings Clare, who has lost her memory after a terrible accident in Zimbabwe, back into the company of her large, clever, complicated family. In a vigorous story of sibling rivalry and attachment, award-winning Maitland explores the family's conflicting views on freedom and responsibility, sin and virtue. A realistic novel, full of thought and feeling, from a writer who is consistently interesting.

■ A FAMILY ROMANCE
By Anita Brookner
Penguin, £5.99

A vintage Brookner, containing all the novelist's trademarks of minimal plot, resonating atmosphere, and several very sad women in cardigans. Jane is the introverted child of protective parents whose conventional London upbringing is rocked from time to time by the visits of her aunt Dolly, a continental figure of boozing zest and vitality. Inevitably (this is a Brookner novel, after all), Jane is forced to watch in distress as the grim reality of female existence causes Dolly to lose her optimism and vivacity.

■ LOOK BEHIND YOU!
By Matthew Parris
Robson Books, £8.99

Parliamentary sketch writing is one of the most testing of all journalistic disciplines, demanding a piercing comic eye and a novelist's verbal felicity. Great writers, such as Dickens, have honed their skills reporting that great feeding frenzy which is the Commons. Parris is indisputably the most entertaining contemporary sketch writer. His *Times* column seldom disappoints. He is funny and bold and merciless. As a former MP, he seems to understand the petty rivalries and vanities that drive politicians, and this informs his writing in a way that can be both moving and troubling.

■ THE LETTERS OF WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS:
1945-1959

Edited by Oliver Harris Picador, £7.99
"Maybe the real novel is letters to you," wrote Burroughs to his great confederate and correspondent, Allen Ginsberg. Certainly, the intoxicating mosaic of lechery, paranoia, junk-bonding and jaded wisdom is as evident here as in the fiction (the letters are hardly guaranteed fact). The difference is that here the sad, bad story runs with chronological convenience so all those alienated by the cut-and-paste jumble of *Naked Lunch* can now enjoy afresh the godfather of the beat generation at home, in exile, and off his trolley.



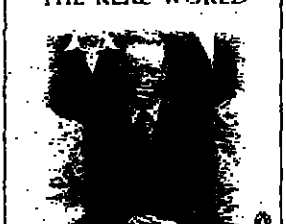
Between Ourselves

■ BETWEEN
OURSELVES
Edited by Karen Payne
Virago, £7.99

This collection of letters between mothers and daughters over more than two centuries includes correspondents well-known and unknown, from the affectionate, down-to-earth Lady Mary Wortley Montagu ("You are no more obliged to me for bringing you into the world, than I am to you for coming into it") to a chilly upper-class English mother, determined to make her daughter feel guilty for taking up with the wrong kind of man. Some letters are lighthearted, more — like Sylvia Plath's terrible, overbright letters to her mother — are heartrending in their anxiety for recognition and desire to please.

Contributors: Nicki Household, Jason Cowley, Alison Burns, Helen Davidson, Jake Michie, Hazel Leslie, Mary Sullivan

WILLIAM
TREVOR
EXCURSIONS IN
THE REAL WORLD



Excursions in the Real World

■ EXCURSIONS IN THE
REAL WORLD
By William Trevor
Penguin, £5.99

These 29 short pieces from the last 20 years are published as autobiographical essays, but there are several purely literary items like the entertaining one on the Anglo-Irish writers Somerville and Ross. There is something muffled in the disconnected essays on his own experience, but they give an idea of his Irish background, his parents' unhappy marriage, work in a run-down prep school and a London advertising agency. And the master of the short story glimmers here, as Trevor describes helping a runaway Iranian wife search in vain for her faithless lover through the beautiful city of Shiraz.

Elizabeth Jane Howard talks to Danny Dantiger about writing the fourth and last novel of the widely acclaimed *Cazet* Chronicles. The third book in the series, *Confusion*, is published in paperback by Macmillan at £5.99.

6 This country changed enormously between 1937 and 1947. I decided to write about those years in the form of a family saga, and there's a good deal of my youth in it, and many of the people I use are my family.

The war was fairly grim for me — I can't say that I enjoyed it. Life was really drab: one's friends were being killed; and when it wasn't frightening, it was boring. It seemed I had no youth at all.

I got married, very young, to a man who was considerably older than me, and at just 19 I had my daughter. My husband was away most of the time, so we hardly ever saw each other, and even when he came home, I was working as an air-raid warden and

Chronicles wrested from pain

writing in my spare moments. We probably should never have married, and if there hadn't been a war, I think we wouldn't have.

I used to get terribly confused by falling in love with people, or imagining that I'd fallen in love. The trouble is that falling in love uses the same kind of energy you need for writing, so you can't do both at the same time. I set myself back a lot by being overwhelmed with my feelings for people and not getting on with the job. I've put a good deal of all that in the *Chronicles* too.

I wrote the first book, *The Light Years*, with great difficulty. I realised I didn't want to live in London any more. I was planning to share a house in the country with two friends. But we were gazumped, and so my writing was very much punctuated by feeling that I was going to be



Howard: terribly confused by love

homeless. I couldn't find anywhere I could remotely afford, as I didn't have any money. Money has always been a problem.

I wrote most of the second book in Suffolk, where I found a house, but it was a shambles, so I had builders in

for nearly a year. That really took a lot of discipline. I just sat in my study and did what they called my "word work", while they banged about.

With the third book, *Confusion*, I felt more settled, but it was a bit of a book the whole way through. The characters demanded to be treated accurately. If you're writing four novels about the same people, you must give an honest account of them, and they're changing all the time — not always happily, or even successfully, but it is very important that characters in novels do change, as they do in life.

With each new book I just have to plunge in and hope for the best, but nearly all the time I feel I'm no good at writing, and that's incredibly depressing.

It's happening now, with the fourth book. I just feel that even if I could

once do it, I shouldn't be able to again. It's extremely painful and makes me anxious. I don't enjoy writing it all.

Perhaps life would be easier if I had somebody to share the house, to have some company in the evenings. I have friends to stay occasionally, but a lot of the time I am entirely alone, and the evenings feel lonely. I can't wait to have this last book off my back, but because the other ones have been successful, I'm scared of it being an anticlimax, or of making a mess of it. I wake up terribly early in the mornings, sweating with fear.

Inevitably, one has become fond of the characters. I've lived with them a long time, and I think about them a great deal. When I'm gardening or cooking, aspects of them come into my mind or things they would say. It will be horrible leaving them.

I always cry when I get to the end of a book. It's a mixture of relief and sadness that the characters have gone. But I shall end them, because I want to write other things. 9

With 1994 clarets likely to be expensive, John Higgins suggests investing in the printed word

A shelf of best cellars



A vintage year: at work in the vineyards of Bordeaux

BEFORE the September rains, the 1994 vintage in Bordeaux was expected to be among the best. Latest reports suggest that the quality will be good, but the quantity only modest, which in claretspeak means that wines are going to be expensive. So perhaps cautious drinkers should consider investing in the autumn crop of books instead.

FOR LAYING DOWN:

There are Oxford Companions to music and literature, so why not wine? Where would the High Tables be without it? The omission has now been rectified by *The Oxford Companion to Wine*, edited by Jancis Robinson (Oxford University Press, £30), which is going to prove indispensable to dons and ordinary wine-bibbers alike. An impressive bunch of experts has been assembled to write the entries, some signed and others not, on every aspect of the grape. All its ailments, all its glories and all its infinite varieties are listed. If you want to know about Tamaioasa, as I did after reading another book in the autumn selection, Robinson will provide the answer.

A select band of wine writers are reckoned worthy of inclusion, mere merchants generally are not. Even a house as old as Berry Bros does not rate an entry. The illustrations are handsome, the maps in some cases skimpy.

For the latter turn to Hugh Johnson's *World Atlas of Wine* (Mitchell Beazley, £30), now in its fourth edition in just over 20 years. Johnson not only has a sharp cartographer's eye for where the woods end and the grapes begin, but is also very alert to new trends. Today, in north-eastern Hungary, now gets a map to itself. Foreign money is moving in there fast, and the chances are that the "king of wines" will once more be wearing a crown — at a price.

Sprinkled among the maps are fascinating statistics. Con-

sumption in the major wine-producing countries is decreasing sharply — perhaps those who toil in the vineyards are no longer rewarded in kind or maybe they have just sobered up. But in those parts of the world where little or no wine is produced, including Britain and Denmark, it is going up. Britain takes 37.5 per cent of Australian wine exports, so Oddbins should be well in the running for the Golden Clobber award.

Larousse Encyclopaedia of Wine (Larousse, £30) does not go in much for figures, but does take the rare risk among reference books of passing judgment on the wine makers by regularly picking out the best of them. Patriotism abounds: France gets more than 170 pages in the "Wine lands of the world" section, with Germany (now one of the least enterprising of wine-making countries) and Italy runners-up at about 40 each.

The best contributions are on such obvious, but often overlooked, subjects as matching wine with food. Larousse is also pungent on wine faults: the presence of hydrogen sulphide gives the "smell of bad eggs, rubber, garlic, rotting vegetation, with tastes to match".

Not much chance of finding that in *Haut Brion* by Asa Briggs (Faber, £25 hardback, £9.99 paperback). The late Cyril Ray worked on the sound journalistic principle of basing his research on the areas where the browsing and slinking were likely to be best, and he wrote books on Lafite, Mouton and Bollinger. Lord Briggs follows in those footsteps and begins by dismissing the legend that Haut Brion was another of the "lrish" châteaux, taking its name from the Cork merchant O'Brien, but the history of the chateau is not that eventful and has to be larded with a

lot of social history on drinking habits down the ages.

On that Briggs is an expert, but he is less meticulous about the present, and references to "Edward Penning-Roswell" and our own "Jane Macquitty" should have been corrected.

FOR IMMEDIATE CONSUMPTION:

The Sunday Telegraph Good Wine Guide 1995 by Robert Joseph (Macmillan, £7.99) should be renamed "The Good Merchant Guide". The section assessing 150 or so traders in wine, bursting with star ratings and best buys, is by far the most valuable in the book and is generally fair. On the wines themselves, Joseph's view veers towards the acerbic. Lord Briggs finds the 1983 Haut Brion "the velvety wine of the year... ageing beautifully". The Joseph verdict: "currently disappointing".

A search to uncover the best wine pulses in Britain for next year's edition looks a little hazardous. Among the nominations is "La Gaiache, Tunbridge Wells, Dorset". That is going to take a bit of finding. Of Clarke's Wine Guide 1995 (Mitchell Beazley, £9.99) is even more obsessed than Joseph with stars and prices and is aimed at those who want to know whether Chateau Kismessque comes a few bob cheaper from Swizzlesticks than it does at Belchers. Larousse would not like him very much: he draws his £100

cellar entirely from eastern Europe (a considerable risk) and cannot find room for a single bottle of claret in his £1,000 cellar or among his 100 best buys of the year. The latter, though, do include two vintages of Tamaioasa, which by the way is a muscat from eastern Romania.

● The Wine Magazine Pocket Wine Buyer's Guide (Dorling Kindersley, £9.99) is also available.

NEXT WEEK

CHRISTMAS BOOKS

A 16-page Christmas Books supplement, sponsored by Dillons the Bookstore, will be published with *The Times* next Saturday. PLUS: authors and publishers choose their best books of 1994.

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PROPERTY

17

Letting your French home could tax your patience

Many Britons who own a second home in France hope to make an income by letting it. Typical: a two-bedroomed cottage in a country area, such as the Dordogne, could fetch £200 to £300 a week in the peak summer months. A larger, more opulent house, with a pool, on the Côte d'Azur could bring in £2,000 a week or more.

However, letting your home in France could turn out to be expensive. Apart from the risk from unruly tenants who break furniture, block drains and insult neighbours, there is another more worrying and potentially more costly factor: the French taxman.

Income tax is payable in France on income from letting French property, even if you live in Britain and the money is paid into your bank account here. It does not matter whether you let your home there for two weeks to a favourite aunt or for 52 weeks a year on a commercial basis, all rental income should be declared to the French tax authorities. Failure to do so can lead to penalties, high interest charges, fines and even imprisonment.

With more foreign property owners letting their homes in France, the French Revenue is taking a keener interest. Prosecutions for non-declaration of rental income and tax fraud have started on the

Côte d'Azur, where many owners of second homes have been trying to dodge the taxman.

With the help of computers, the local authorities, gas, water and electricity boards, the British taxman and, possibly, even your French neighbours, the French Revenue can find out how often your property is occupied each year — and by whom. You may be asked to declare (and prove) how many weeks a year your property is let and the amount of income this generates.

All French taxpayers (and that includes you if you let your French home) must complete an annual tax return, known as the *Declaration des Revenus* or Cerfa 2042N/2044. Forms are available from your local French tax office, or the French

Owners with a second house over the Channel often plan to rent out their property for most of the year — but they should beware the French taxman



This restored 13th-century Provencal mas in the Var has a self-contained guest wing, swimming pool, pool house and views of the sea. It lets for £4,300 a week in the peak season, about half that out of season (Sifex, 071-384 1200)

Consulate in London at 21 Cromwell Road, London SW7. These should be sent to the Centre des Impôts des Non-résidents, 9 rue d'Uzes, 75094 Paris, before the April 30. There are penalties for non-registration and lateness.

If you are resident in Britain, you must also declare any income received in France on your UK tax return. Thanks to the double taxation treaty between France and Britain, tax on French letting income will normally be paid only in France.

little or no tax to pay. However, if you fail to complete a tax form at the start you risk paying a hefty fine later.

If you let a property on a regular basis or offer services, such as bed and breakfast, a daily maid, supply of linen

and reception of clients, you may also have to charge your customers VAT.

It is wise to seek professional advice from a French accountant or legal adviser before submitting a tax form to ensure that you are claiming all the allowances to which you are entitled. Some legal firms in this country who specialise in French tax law may be able to help. These include the solicitors, Pretvys, of 25 Elm Street, Ipswich, Suffolk (0473 232121).

Those who want to own a property in France, but wish to use it for only a few weeks each year and do not want the hassle of letting it themselves, are often attracted to the various leaseback schemes on offer. With this sort of deal you buy a property at a reduced price in return for surrendering the rental rights for 11 years, during which time you retain the use of the property for six weeks a year.

Be extremely careful before entering into any leaseback agreement. The terms and conditions should be checked by your legal adviser to ensure that the developer is obliged to give vacant possession at the end of the 11 years without you having to pay out an indemnity charge, which might end up costing you more than the property is worth.

C. T.

To mark the start of our commuter challenge contest, Cheryl Taylor looks at the range of properties available around the M25 belt

The property market in commuter country around the M25 has been showing signs of recovery over the past 12 months, with house prices at the top end (over £600,000) increasing by up to 19 per cent in some places, according to the estate agents, Savills.

At the lower end of the market, first-time buyers have been active throughout the area, with plenty of small houses and flats on offer for under £100,000. Properties for sale in the middle range (£100,000 to £200,000) are in short supply and demand is pushing up prices.

Most agents agree that progress in the market has been slowed by the reluctance of many sellers to put their own property on the market because there is little to buy.

The three factors that have been keeping the brakes on the market are negative equity, the threat of unemployment, and possible future increases in mortgage interest rates.

Properties within earshot of the M25, with its increased levels of traffic noise and air pollution, many of them threatened by motorway extensions, are now difficult to sell, according to Peter Everett of GA Property Services in Chorleywood, Hertfordshire.

In the last four years, more than 70 homes in



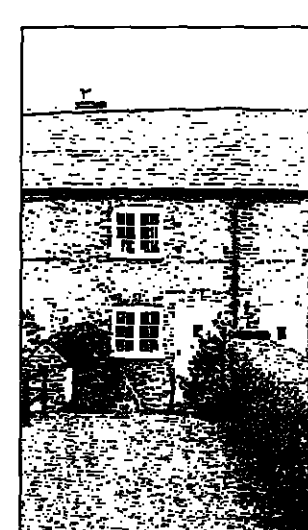
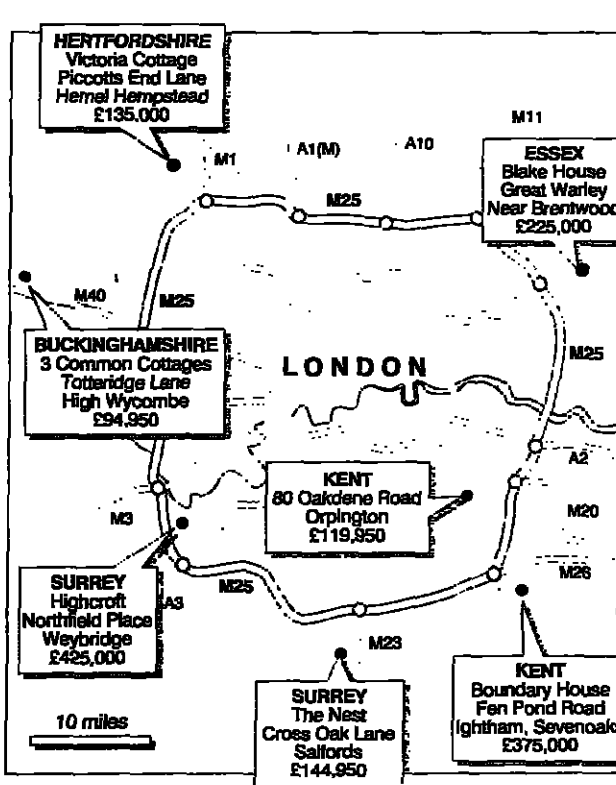
Around the M25

the Chorleywood area have been purchased by the Department of Transport under Blight Orders.

The eventual size of the M25 seems to be a greater worry to buyers than traffic noise in parts of Surrey, according to David Brown of GA Property Services in Banstead. There are plans to widen the stretch of motorway around Reigate to four lanes and talk of building spur roads running parallel to the M25. Where sales have been achieved, price levels have been up to 30 per cent less than similar properties situated a mile or more away from the traffic.

In order to escape the worst of the traffic roar and problems associated with possible motorway widening schemes and link roads in the future, most houses in country areas need to be at least three miles from the M25. Houses situated about five miles from the M25 can command higher prices in most places.

In parts of Kent, the Channel Tunnel rail link is still creating problems for vendors with properties bordering existing lines, with increased passenger and freight traffic in prospect for the next few years. Properties are achieving between 10 and 20 per cent less than similar homes situated away from the lines.



Buckinghamshire: 3 Common Cottages, Totteridge Lane, High Wycombe. Two-bedroom cottage, about 15 minutes' drive from the M25 (30 minutes by fast train to Marylebone). About £94,950 (Halifax, 0494 446365).



Hertfordshire: Victoria Cottage, 3 Piccotts End Lane, Hemel Hempstead. Three-bedroom, detached 19th-century cottage in walled gardens, about three miles from the M25 (20 minutes by fast train to Euston). About £135,000 (Woolwich, 0442 230400).



Essex: Blake House, Great Warley, near Brentwood. Four-bedroom, grade II listed house with garden, opposite the village green, about three miles from the M25 (25 minutes by fast train to Liverpool Street). About £225,000 (Savills, 0245 269311).



Kent: 80 Oakdene Road, Orpington. Three-bedroom, detached neo-Tudor house, about ten minutes' drive from the M25 (30 minutes by fast train to Charing Cross). About £119,950 (Alan de Maid, 0689 824312).



Kent: Boundary House, Fen Pond Road, Igham, Sevenoaks. Four-bedroom, grade II listed 17th-century farmhouse in under two acres of gardens and with double garage, on the edge of Igham village, about five miles from the M25 (45 minutes by fast train to Victoria). About £375,000 (Savills, 0732 824312).



Surrey: Highcroft, Northfield Place, Weybridge. Five-bedroom, detached house in over half an acre of landscaped gardens and with double garage, at the end of a private road, about four miles from the M25 (30 minutes by fast train to Waterloo). About £425,000 (Hamptons, 0932 856736).



Surrey: The Nest, Cross Oak Lane, Salfords. Two-bedroom, period replica country cottage and gardens, about five miles from the M25 (35 minutes by fast train to Victoria). About £144,950 (GA Town & Country, 0737 244371).

THE TIMES Commuter Challenge

in association with Vauxhall Monterey

Whether you travel to work by car, cycle, train, bus or tube, *The Times Commuter Challenge*, in association with Vauxhall Monterey, can ease your journey by offering a set of prizes with the commuter in mind. The questions for our intriguing daily quiz game are set by Bamber Gascoigne from the updated edition of his *Encyclopaedia of Britain*. Starting on Monday the challenge will run for three weeks with three ways to win.

The Daily Game — every day for 17 days we will publish three questions. Answer the three daily questions correctly and you could win a Philips rechargeable portable CD player and five runners-up prizes of the *Encyclopaedia of Britain*. And by keeping a record of your answers you can also enter our weekly and accumulator games.

The Weekly Game — the clues for this appear in the daily questions on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Included in the questions on those days will be a question on cycling. When you have all three answers to the cycling questions phone the weekly prize competition line on the Friday for your chance to win one of three Raleigh cycles a week.

The Accumulator Game — this game is played by keeping a record of your answers to the daily questions and placing the first letter of the answer to each question in one of the 11 specified word spaces on the grid (see example below). Then by unscrambling the letters for each word at the end of our three week challenge you will be able to solve our 11 word accumulator question with the chance to win our star prize of a superb Vauxhall Monterey RS 3.2i V6 worth £22,000. Runners-up prizes include one prize of £500 in cash to put towards your travel costs and three further prizes of £100 worth of Texaco's new CleanSystem3 petrol, a new generation in petrol which helps clean right through to the engine's combustion chamber and can give you greater economy, lower emissions and improved performance.



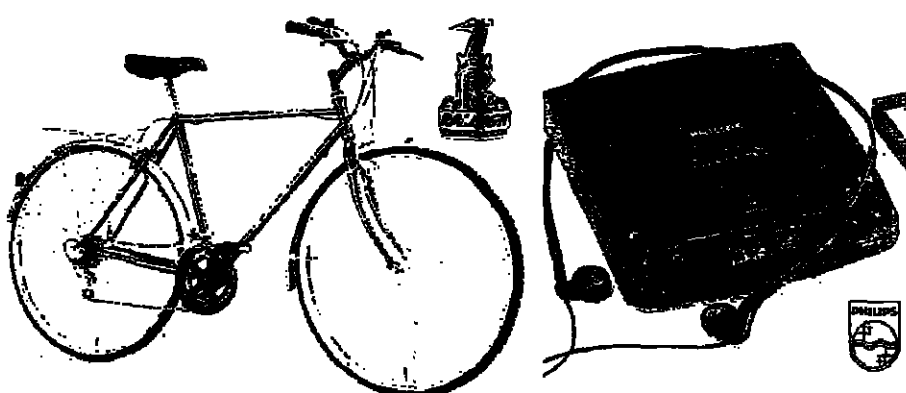
ACCUMULATOR PRIZES Vauxhall Monterey RS 3.2i V6 worth £22,000. Commuter with imposing luxury in Vauxhall's latest addition to the leisure vehicle market. The Monterey RS 3.2i's three-door, off-road body styling is ideal for commuting — not only does it deliver the space to travel in comfort, it also has a very high driving position to give you a commanding view of the road ahead. One prize of £500 cash and three prizes of £100 worth of Texaco's new CleanSystem3 petrol will go to four runners-up.

TASTER QUESTION

Just to give you the flavour of the Challenge, here is one of the first set of questions which will be published on Monday. Full details of how to enter, with phone numbers will also appear on Monday.

1. Which London Company was the first legal commercial radio station in Britain, going on air in 1974? (Accumulator Clue: The first letter of this answer belongs to word 1)

The answer to this question, and all those appearing in *Commuter Challenge*, are set by Bamber Gascoigne and can be found in the new updated edition of his *Encyclopaedia of Britain* (Macmillan £29.95).



WEEKLY PRIZES Raleigh Pioneer Jaguar. The Raleigh Pioneer Jaguar is a cycle designed for commuting. Top-speed (indicated gearing) will cope with any road conditions and the standard rear carrier will accommodate most commuter loads. The Jaguar carries a 15-year guarantee.

DAILY PRIZE Philips rechargeable portable CD player. While away your journey with your choice of music in CD quality with Philips lightweight player model AZ623. Five runners-up receive the *Encyclopaedia of Britain*.

THE ACCUMULATOR GAME

Having phoned in your answers to the daily and weekly prizes, now take the first letter of each answer and play the accumulator game. Printed here is a grid. Every day, as you answer the questions you will be gathering the first letter of each answer to fill in the grid. We will tell you which word each letter belongs to in the grid but it is up to you to put all the letters in order to form each word at the end of the game. When you have worked out all the words they will form another question. Once you know the answer to this question, phone in your answer to enter for a Vauxhall Monterey RS 3.2i V6 and our runners-up prizes of £500 cash and three prizes of £100 of Texaco's new CleanSystem3 petrol. In the accumulator game, where the answer to a question requires a name, the first letter of the surname applies.



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CHANNEL TUNNEL: What travellers can look forward to when they take the car train to France ...

Le Shuttle is meant to bore

The Channel Tunnel has been a long time coming but at last it is a reality. Stretching about 31 miles beneath the sea, the £10 billion tunnel has begun to earn its keep.

Last Monday, 18 months later than planned, the £24 million Eurostar trains began foot-passenger services from London's Waterloo station to Paris and Brussels. Next month (the operators hope), travellers will be able to drive their cars on to Le Shuttle at Folkestone for the Calais run.

Ten billion pounds is a lot of money to spend on a tunnel — so the question of whether it will be worth it is one of more than academic interest.

The visionaries and the crackpots of the past who helped to make the tunnel dream come true would be intrigued now to match the reality with their fantasies. They envisaged a bridge or tunnel link with huge caverns, mid-Channel islands and halls hung with chandeliers. The reality is very different.

Travel on the Le Shuttle is a boring experience, and that is almost official. It may not be much of a selling point, but ordinaryness is the reality on which the Eurotunnel company hopes to capture at least half of all accompanied car journeys on the Dover-Calais route by the end of 1996.

Christopher Garnett, the commercial director of Eurotunnel, says the journey is meant to be an ordinary experience: no fuss or strain; drive to the Folkestone terminal, roll on to Le Shuttle and

about one hour later be bowling down a French motorway.

As the name suggests, Le Shuttle is little more than that: an almost utility service designed to take drivers and their cars from Folkestone to Calais in 35 minutes or less. The service will live or die on its speed, reliability and safety.

Even the duty-free facilities at the Folkestone and Calais terminals are offered with reluctance. They are there only because they are a key selling point of the ferry companies. If Eurotunnel gets its way, the availability of duty-free drinks, tobacco and other goods will be outlawed.

Inside the Folkestone terminal, motorists are confronted by a toll booth where they can buy a ticket, using either cash, credit card or cheque. They can then visit the tax and duty-free shops, a bureau de

change, newsagents, a chemist or one of the restaurants.

Before driving on board Le Shuttle, travellers and their cars will be subject to checks by British Customs and will then pass through to the French control point, ensuring no delay on arrival in Calais.

On board Le Shuttle, the experience is underwhelming. Passengers can stay in their cars and read a newspaper or get out and adjust their luggage. They are confined inside a brightly lit, air-conditioned metal tube with no view through the tiny windows of the tunnel through which they are travelling at 80mph.

With steel shutters separating carriages, the only diversion is to operate sealed doors to walk to the lavatories, which are positioned on every third coach.

The process of getting to within weeks of operating Le Shuttle has been so traumatic that obvious touches are missing. Fun packs for the children could help to turn what is little more than a smooth but long journey on the London Underground into a memorable occasion. Within the carriages, wall-mounted maps and a potted history would help to remind cynical travellers of the wonder through which they are being carried.

Without doubt, Le Shuttle will initially be a huge success for the many thousands of people who will want to experience the journey. The crucial question is whether, once they have done it, they will return or revert to the ferries.

TIM JONES

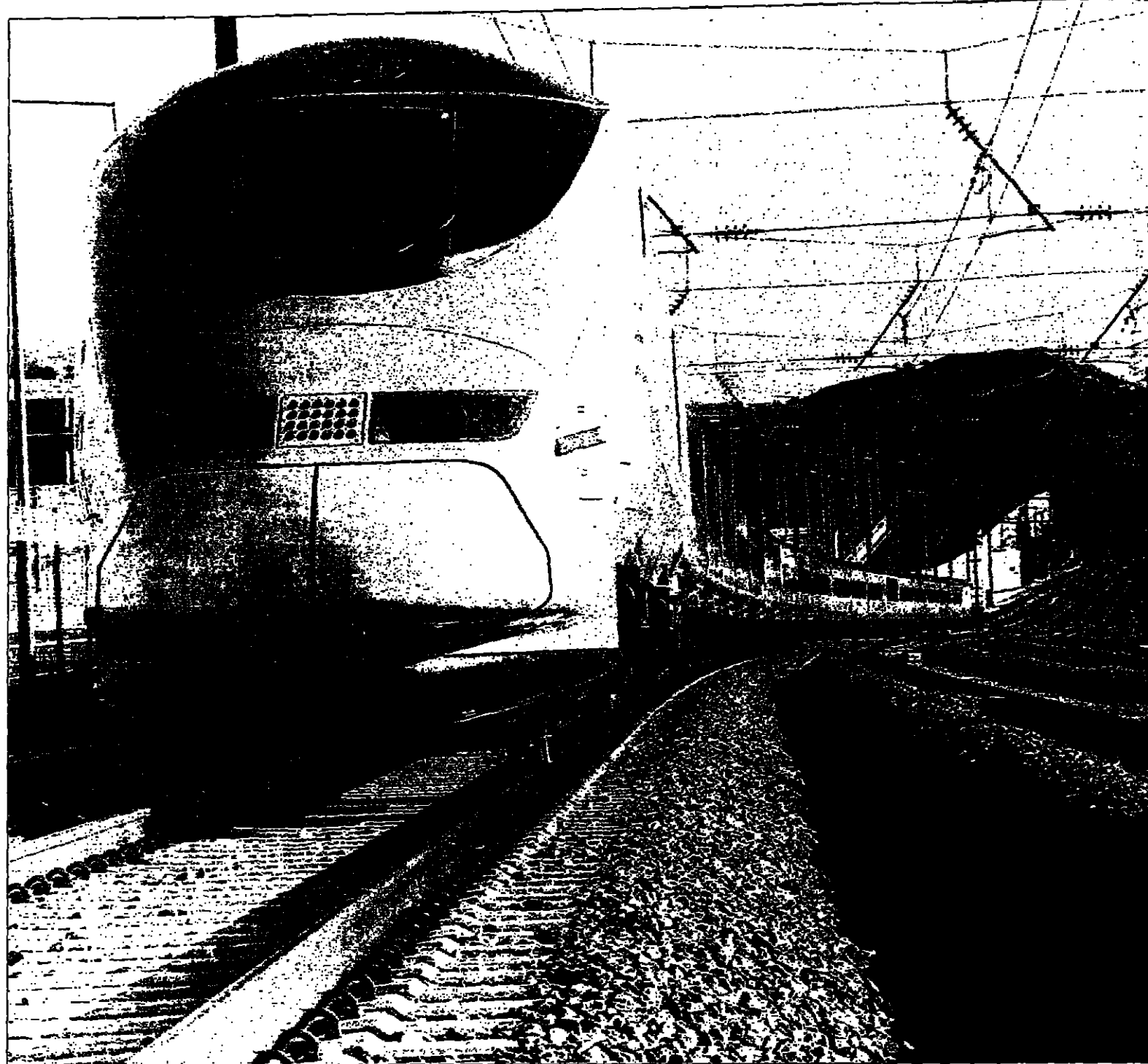
TRAVEL FACTS

□ **EUROSTAR:** Two departures a day to Paris (8hr) and two to Brussels (8hr 15min). Return fares: Discovery Special — Standard class (to be booked 14 days ahead) £95. Discovery — Standard class £155. Discover Gold — First class, including a meal, £195.

Bookings for Eurostar and other Continental routes can be made at The Rail Shop (0345 300009).

□ **LE SHUTTLE:** Eurotunnel will encourage most people to pay at the departure terminal (prices to be announced). You will be able to book and pay in advance at travel agents but this will guarantee only the day of travel, not the time. Tickets must be picked up at the Cheriton terminal, Folkestone.

Customer Service Centre at Cheriton Park, 0303 271100.



While the Eurostar train (above) hurtles between London, Paris and Brussels, motorists must wait a little longer for Le Shuttle from Folkestone to get going

Down the hole for the first time

THE observations of three Times staffers who took trial Shuttle trips to Calais.

FIRST, the wait in Le Shuttle's "allocation area" (not guaranteed for every passenger, Eurotunnel says) before you drive on to the train. This was so exciting that Alan Coren, the Times columnist famous for finding entertainment almost anywhere, ran his car battery flat listening to his radio.

Next, the cup of tea at the allocation area's mobile canteen and the trip to the (one) Ladies, worrying experiences these: how will these lonely facilities cope with a packed car park? Eurotunnel is confident that the wait will be no more than ten minutes and that you will not need drinks or lavatories — so confident that the mobile canteen is being removed. If there should be a "serious delay" passengers will be taken back to the terminal facilities.

Passengers may create their own delay of course by forgetting their passport. With no post office at the terminal from which to purchase an instant, one-year passport you will have to go to the nearest post office, at Cheriton.

Once on the train, play the

game "What can I do in 35 minutes in the glare of strip lighting?" There is no buffet car, no video screens with cartoons for children, no route maps, restaurant or supermarket guides on the naked walls. Distractions might upset schedules apparently; you must stay close to your car for efficient unloading. It seems only a matter of time, boredom and breaking open the duty-free before the first members of the 18-minute Club make themselves known (it takes 18 minutes to go through the tunnel). And in that light, it won't be a pretty sight.

BRIGID CALLAGHAN

I HAVE always thought that the Channel Tunnel would be hugely popular, and that Eurotunnel was effectively building two giant cash registers in Britain and France. So I was surprised to discover that Le Shuttle was quite boring.

Clearing British and French Customs at Folkestone was helpful but the French officials were very rude, and refused to speak English.

The journey was somewhat tedious and, with one lavatory every three carriages, queues developed rapidly.

Once you have entered the tunnel it's a bit like being confined inside the car deck of a ferry. The chef du train and his assistants moved up and down the train all the time, checking that no one was smoking or causing trouble. But I did wonder how they would cope with a bunch of drunken louts, who could make the trip very unpleasant.

The journey was smooth and I would use Le Shuttle if I were in a hurry, but if I had the time I'd still go by ferry.

MICHAEL DYNES

IT IS the speed of Le Shuttle that dazzles. We left Folkestone at 11.54am and arrived for lunch at Wimereux, ten miles from Calais, by 1.03pm.

The fact of the Shuttle is exciting but the journey, as its managers intend, is boring. Passengers simply sit in their cars or can walk the gangways. I suffered from no sense of claustrophobia in the spacious, well-lit carriages.

Memories that linger: the motorway sign approaching Calais — surely never seen before in nationalist France — signposting drivers to Grande Bretagne; the thrill of emerging from the Shuttle almost direct on to the Calais motorway system (a drive of about 50 yards) and, back in Britain,

direct on to the M20; and the thought that on the Shuttle there are no bow doors.

The ferry is more romantic, the Shuttle is faster. If the latter can keep the cars rolling, it will be the choice of those who want to cross the Channel quickly and efficiently.

BRIAN MacARTHUR

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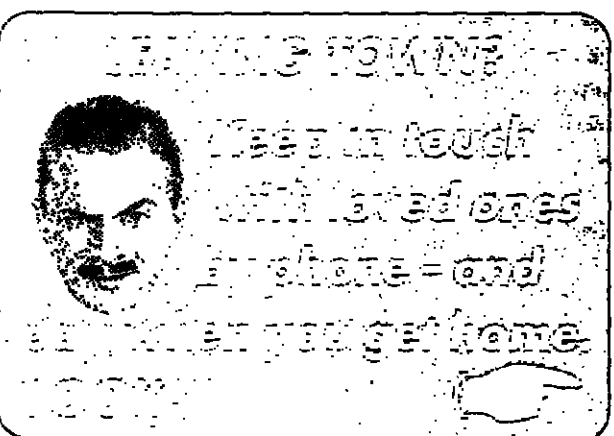
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TRAVEL

23

... and two personal choices of where to eat, shop and visit once they arrive

Visitors' playground

If you are tempted to use Le Shuttle when it begins, don't rush across the Pas-de-Calais when you reach France — as most Britons do. Instead, dally awhile; there are scores of differing pleasures — both scenic and man-made — within an hour's drive of the French terminal at Calais.

Towns

□ **Bergues.** A peaceful place, with walled fortifications, bel-fry (a copy of the original destroyed in 1944), first-rate Musée Municipal and a network of canals fringed by Flemish-style houses. North of the ramparts is the star-shaped Couronne d'Hondschote, a defensive complex of moats and walls designed by Vauban, the wily military architect, which provides a peaceful walk alongside a canal and lakes.

□ **Boulogne.** Don't miss the superb Nautica, the world's largest sea centre: there's an aquarium for the public and research facilities for the marine professionals. Visit tropical lagoons with rainbow-colored fish and see conger eels in a rusting wreck. Spend time in the Ville Haute, the 13th-century hilltop town, with the Basilica of Notre Dame and the oldest church, St Nicolas, in place Dalton; and the museum, in the castle, filled for Egyptian treasures.

□ **Calais.** Admire Rodin's bronze sculpture, "The Burghers of Calais," in front of the town hall; the work commemorates the surrender of six townspeople in 1347 to King Edward III. The lighthouse,

near the Gare Maritime, offers exceptional views across the Channel to the English coast. The Musée des Beaux Arts et de la Dentelle has a mixture of fine arts, scientific and technical culture and exhibits of Flemish lace and linen.

□ **Hesdin.** Like Montreuil-sur-Mer, a film-maker's delight. (Many of the original Maitre television episodes were shot here.) Pretty town houses and riverside walks; a cobbled main square; an old town hall, once a palace and now incorporating a small museum containing fine tapestries.

□ **Montreuil-sur-Mer.** Once a Roman port and now a small hilltop town more than 10km inland. Enter through the northern medieval town gates. Wander through cobbled streets and walk the Vauban red-brick ramparts circuit (3km) with its fine views. Victor Hugo, in *Les Misérables*, wrote about the town.

□ **Le Touquet.** A swish seaside resort with elegant promenade and wide, long sandy beaches — and stylish villas surrounded by pines. Many designer boutiques and casinos. The Aquadul indoor watersports centre on the seafront keeps children happy.

□ **St Omer.** An ancient wool town with canal-side houses, handsome main square, impressive Basilica of Notre

Dame and the exceptional museum in the Hôtel de Sandelin (displays of fine and decorative arts, especially clay pipes and ceramics). At nearby Arques the astonishing Ascenseur des Fontinettes has been preserved: the hydraulic lift

handsome small château; and a minute waterfall to the southwest. The Course Valley, between Desvres and Montreuil-sur-Mer, is at its most appealing where the borders of Inxent and Beussent rub together. The ancient auberge



Wander the cobbled streets of Montreuil-sur-Mer

was built in 1887 to replace a series of locks and raised barges a distance of 40ft.

Countryside

□ Much of the Pas-de-Calais terrain is unassuming, unspoiled and unseen — with extensive views from high ground and, as a contrast, numerous pastoral valleys. The Crequoise Valley, southwest of Fruges, is especially eye-catching at Royon, where the D130 crosses the stream; trees provide shade on the "green"; there's an auberge; a

at Inxent still captivates. What, too, could be more refreshing on a hot day than sitting on the bank of the stream, shaded by trees, with a drink in your hand (buy the latter at the Café des Sports), at Doudeauville.

In the hills east of Boulogne, Le Boulonnais, are quiet villages and lanes — part of the Parc Naturel Régional Nord Pas-de-Calais: Rety and Le West are just two. The park is split into two parts: a semi-circle to the east of Boulogne and a circle around St Omer —

which includes the marais (marshes) and waterways (explore by punt) north of the town. For information on events and places to see, call at the Maison du Parc, Manoir du Huisbos, at Le West; and the Manoir du Parc, Le Grand Vannage, at Arques (south of St Omer).

North of Boulogne is the Côte d'Opale, renowned for sandy beaches, dunes, walks, cliffs and the glorious views from Cap Gris-Nez. Explore both Le Boulonnais and the Côte d'Opale by bike. Many firms hire them, including Cyclo Plein Air at Wissant and Cycles Marius at Wimille.

Children will love the long, sandy beaches at Le Touquet: the 17km-long plage at Hardelot-Plage; and the dunes to the north of Wimereux.

Where to eat

□ **Le Soubise.** 49 rue Bergues, 59210. Coudekerque-Branché (010 33 28 64 66 00). Michel Hazebroug is a creative classicist. His *saumon et canard* menu (£30) has a choice of six starters and seven main courses. Meals £11 to £25. Closed Saturday lunchtimes and Sunday evenings.

□ **Au Côte d'Argent.** 1 digue G. Berthe, 62100 Calais (010 33 21 34 68 07). Bertrand Lefebvre's restaurant overlooks both the Channel and the bustling port entrance. A classical and regional haven. Meals £11 to

£30. Closed Sunday evenings and Mondays.

□ **Epicure.** 1 rue Gare, 62930 Wimereux (010 33 21 83 21 83). Cuisine Moderne. Meals £17 to £27. Closed Sunday evenings and Wednesdays.

□ **La Meunerie.** 59229 Téthelen, Dunkerque (010 33 28 26 14 30). Restaurant (once a mill) with magnificent bedrooms. Alain Gellé cooks a wide range of neo-classical specialties. Meals £36 to £55. Rooms £55 to £95. Closed Sunday evenings and Mondays.

Where to stay

□ **Dunkerque: Campanile** (010 33 28 64 64 70) and **Hôtel du Lac** (010 33 28 60 70 60); both at Lac d'Armbouts-Cappel, south of A16 and both with parking.

□ **Calais: Métropole Hôtel** (010 33 21 97 54 00) and **Windsor** (010 33 21 34 59 40); both with garages.

□ **Boulogne: Métropole Hôtel** (010 33 21 31 54 30) with garage; and **Ibis** (010 33 21 32 15 15).

□ **Le Touquet: Novotel** (010 33 21 09 85 00) and **Ibis** (010 33 21 09 87 00); both on beach and with parking and indoor heated sea-water swimming pool.

RICHARD BINNS

● All the topographical information and restaurant recommendations are from Richard Binns's new guide, *Allez France! Chiltern House, £10.99, hardback*.

Richard Binns also recommends the new English-language Michelin green guide, *Flanders, Picardy and the Paris Region (£7.45) and Michelin's map-guide The Channel Tunnel (£3.25)*.

Say bonjour to good buys

The Channel Tunnel is one further incentive to enjoy an international shopping expedition, with a good French meal or two thrown in. Here are some tips on the best places to visit for the pick of Gallic shops.

Best places to buy beer, wine, and spirits

□ **J Sainsbury Bières Vins et Spiritueux.** foyer to the Mammoth hypermarket, Fort-Nieulay, Route de Boulogne, Calais-Ouest: a banker for those who want to play safe, buying lines with which they are familiar in Britain. Some 250 Sainsbury's selections, including own-labels, all at French prices. A Tesco wine, beer and spirit shop will open shortly near the Channel Tunnel terminal.

□ **Auchan.** Route Nationale 40, Grande Synthe, Dunkerque or Route Nationale 42, St Martin-es-Boulogne, Boulogne-sur-Mer: the best French hypermarket chain, selling classed-growth claret in original wooden cases and *grande marque* champagnes as well as bargain-basement vins de pays.

□ **The Grape Shop.** 85-87 rue Victor Hugo, Boulogne-sur-Mer: a British-owned fine wine specialist with a 400-strong list.

□ **The Wine Society, France.** corner of rue Pressin and rue Parroisse, Hesdin: the thoroughly reputable International Exhibition Co-operative Wine Society (life membership £20) makes 100 of its well-chosen lines available at French prices at its Hesdin showrooms. They can be bought from stock on the spot, or, to avoid disappointment, reserved by giving ten days' notice.

Suggested other best buys from hypermarkets

□ **Tinned fish, cans or jars of regional French food specialties,** specialty mustards and vinegars, herbs and spices, herbal teas, coffee, biscuits, unusual varieties of jams and preserves, glassware, kitchen and garden equipment, clothing, cutlery and crockery.

Best specialist food shops

□ **Pâtisserie:** The best French cake shops in Calais are Pâtisserie aux 6 Bourgeois de Calais, 53 rue Royale, Calais-Nord, and Aux Délices de Calais, Boulevard Jacquard, Calais-Sud, but they do not compare with the delights at Le Lido, corner of rue Jean and rue Londres, Le Touquet, the best cake shop within an hour's drive of the tunnel.

□ **Charcuterie:** Bourgeois (formerly Derrien), 1 Grande Rue, Boulogne-sur-Mer, is an invaluable source of cooked meats, sausages, and prepared dishes such as pizzas, quiches, pork with lentils or fully garnished *choucroute*.

□ **Cheeses:** The best is La Fromagerie de Philippe Olivier, 43 rue Thiers, Boulogne-sur-Mer, with more than 200 superb varieties of real farmhouse cheeses, many unpasteurised and all in tip-top condition.

□ **Baker:** Delahaye, 52 rue des Thermes, Calais or Demarchez, on the corner of rue Faidherbe and rue Thiers, Boulogne-sur-Mer.

Recommended shops in Calais for non-food buys

□ **In rue Royale, Calais-Nord:** L'Escalier en Provence, herbs, liqueurs and spices; Transat, boutique; Jacques Dessange, haircare; Silhouette, women's fashions; Philidar, knitting; René Classe, giftware; Descamps, towels and linens.

□ **In Boulevard Jacquard, Calais-Sud:** Gai Jouet, toys; Z, children's fashions.

□ **In Boulevard Lafayette, Calais-Sud:** Henry Martin, men's headgear; Danby Warren-bourg, men's designer fashion.

What to buy at the factory shops

□ The north of France is replete with manufacturers' factory shops selling imperfect or surplus stock, often heavily discounted. Among the most attractive of those easily accessible from the tunnel are Le Creuset (cast-iron cookware and Screwpull products) and Le Bourget (French hosiery and lingerie) at Fresnoy-le Grand near St Quentin. Consult *The Factory Shop Guide for Northern France*, by Gill Cutress and Rolf Stricker, £9.95 from bookshops or £10.95, including p&pp, from 1 Rosebery Mews, Rosebery Road, London SW2 4DQ.

Where to eat

□ **Auberge de la Grenouillère.** La Madeline-sous-

Montreuil, Montreuil (010 33 21 06 07 22): a delightful riverside inn, with exceptionally fine cooking by Roland Gauthier. Under-rated, though starred, by French guides. Closed Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Meals £16-£47.

□ **Relais de la Brocante.** next to the church in Wimille, near Boulogne-sur-Mer (010 33 21 83 19 31): the team here was chosen to cook for the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh, President Mitterrand and other VIPs at the tunnel's official opening. A visit to their small, modest restaurant will show why. Closed Sunday evenings and Mondays. Meals £15.50-£55.

□ **La Liégoise.** 10 rue A Monsigny, Boulogne-sur-Mer (010 33 21 31 61 16, closed Sunday evenings and Wednesdays). Meals £12-£43: I have generally fared better here than at Boulogne's Michelin-starred restaurants, and Alain Delpierre's cooking certainly outclasses anything in Calais, where the most dependable source of a good meal in my experience remains Le Channel, 3 Boulevard de la Résistance (010 33 21 34 42 30, closed Sunday evenings and Tuesdays). Meals £10.50-£36.50.

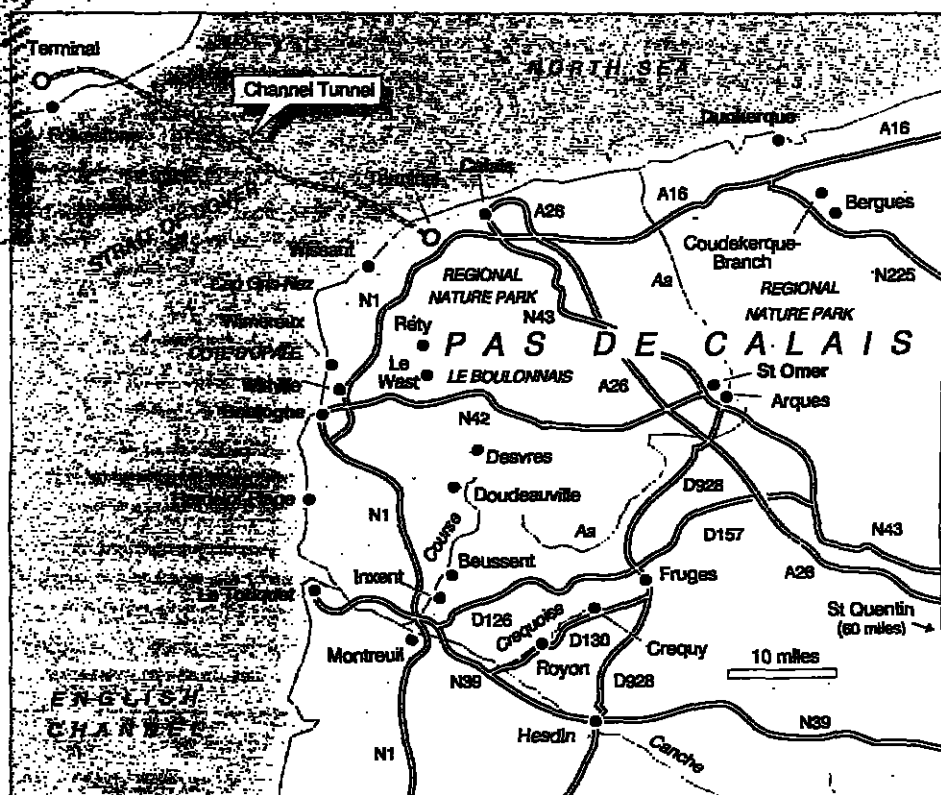
Where to stay

□ **Calais: Hôtel Meurice.** 5 rue Edmond Roche (010 33 21 34 57 03). £43-£58 per night room only, is quieter and more refined, though the Holiday Inn Garden Court (010 33 21 34 69 69) has the harbour view. Meals, £62.

□ **Le Touquet: the Westminster** (010 33 21 05 48 48) is first class, £63-£132 per night room only. Near Boulogne opt for the Cléry, a small country château at Hesdin l'Abbé (010 33 21 83 19 83, £39-£69 per night room only, no restaurant) or the Atlantide at Wimereux (010 33 21 32 41 01) where the restaurant is rather good but closed Sunday evenings and Mondays. £52 per night room only, meals £13.50-£23.

□ **Inland:** I was impressed by the British-owned Château Tilques (010 33 21 93 28 97) outside St Omer. £50-£104 per night room only, and the Grand Hôtel and its starred restaurant Le Président (010 33 23 62 69 77, closed Saturday lunchtimes, Sunday evenings and Monday lunchtimes) in St Quentin. £51-£73 per night room only, meals £18.50-£51.

ROBIN YOUNG



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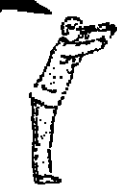
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CHANNEL TUNNEL: Opening up Brussels and the little explored regions of Belgium to British visitors

The best kept secrets in Europe

Divers emerging into the light at the Le Shuttle terminus at Calais, after the short trip through the Channel Tunnel from Folkestone, will have the whole of Europe at their disposal. But rather than blindly heading for the motorways to the south, they should consider some of the beautiful countryside closer by — some of the best kept secrets in Europe.

Belgium is one of the most maligned of all holiday destinations, but it has as much to offer as France: the food is excellent, many of the towns are pretty and steeped with centuries of history — and there are often few other British travellers. Within a few hours' drive of Calais is the Ardennes region, where you can feel you are really in the heart of Europe.

The wooded mountains, concealing deer and wild boar, are closer to Düsseldorf and Cologne than to Paris, and from their southern slopes you

look across Luxembourg to Germany's Eifel Mountains.

The food is wonderfully varied, from French to German to Flemish influences, while beer has equal prominence with Moselle and Champagne wines, including reds, roses and whites as well as the famous sparklings.

Recommended as a resort to aim for in spring or autumn, although crowded in high summer, is La Roche-en-Ardenne, not far off the main highway south of Namur.

Walking in these hills above the looping river Ourthe it is hard to believe that this wooded wonderland is so close to Europe's industrial cities — and to London. The signposted walks into the oak forests are the perfect contrast with high-density life in the south of England.

The French part of the Ardennes is usually overlooked by tourists hurrying past on their way to the region of Champagne, and the sparkling attractions of the cellars

towards Reims and Epemay. The products of the vineyards are interesting, but the chalky country of Champagne, like English downland with added pine plantations, is an acquired taste, although there are acres of apparently unvisited forests of beech and oak in the northwest, best reached from the border town of Givet, on the Meuse.

The acres of vines in central Champagne are far outnumbered by hundreds of square miles of grain and sugar beet growing in vast fields dwarfing anything to be seen in Norfolk.

The degree to which this Ardennes-Champagne region is unexplored by British travellers can be judged from the fact that France's largest lake, Der Chantecoq, is here, within easy driving distance of the Channel ports, yet only one British visitor to France in every hundred has even heard of it.

One suggested point to aim for in a three-day break (two

driving, one sightseeing) is Laon, in the northern part of Champagne, on a hill overlooking the plain. It has a fine cathedral forming the centrepiece of a tangle of medieval streets. The wine is not so famous, but the ambience is better and it is readily reached from Calais.

Equally recommended, especially for sensibly-priced restaurants, is Charleville-Mézières — a delightful French town off the beaten track, where you may find yourself having to speak French.

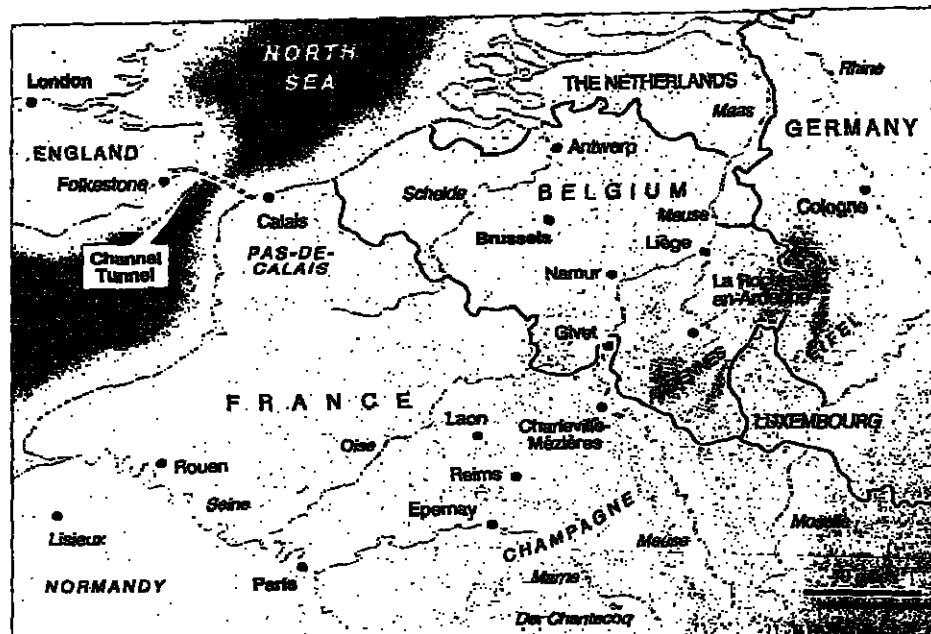
For battleground buffets, the entire region was fought over in two World Wars. That so much charm has survived intact is nothing short of miraculous. Short-break travellers who want fresh scenery, pretty villages and a glass of beer will choose the Ardennes, whether Belgian or French. Those with a firmer eye on the menu — and perhaps a glass of calva-

dos — should head southwest from the Tunnel, towards Normandy, especially the rich lands between Rouen and Lisieux. The villages are often rather plain: the menu is anything but.

Cider, cream and butter are everywhere in this region. Everyone seems to eat heartily and to live forever. Into the fray, or hole, between courses, a calvados is routinely downed to help the meal along.

One of the main things to remember in this part of France is that if you aim too far south you are going to meet the Parisians coming the other way. One of the main charms of Normandy is that much of it looks like the British think their own country ought to look: a patchwork quilt of orchards, fields with cows, flowery meadows and beechwoods. It is probably best to stay among the hedges and copses and leave the beaches to the French.

There are abbeys and splendid half-timbered manor



houses by the score, but somehow they seem to play second fiddle to the two signposted routes through the Pays d'Auge, devoted to cheese and cider. A base to aim for is Lisieux, which is a place of pilgrimage (Sainte Therese) and therefore well supplied

with mid-priced accommodation. The extraordinary devotion of her pilgrims is a sight to behold. Taking the tunnel should allow more adventurous weekend-breakers to reach a France which is neither the crass supermarket culture of the Pas

de Calais nor the expensive faraway beaches of the south, but a charmingly slow-moving world in between. And having spent a day there, they are almost certain to make plans to come back for a fortnight.

WILLY NEWLAND

A capital city for gourmets

As the source of all Euro-rules and regulations, Brussels might not be the first place you'd think of visiting for a weekend. But its image as boring and bureaucratic is unfair. Sophisticated, cultured, stylish and brilliant for food, Brussels has as much to offer as Paris.

Brussels is, in fact, a predominantly French-speaking city surrounded by Flemish-speaking suburbs.

The city centre, which contains almost everything you'll want to see, is about one-and-a-half miles across, which makes it walkable.

Friday evening:

The starting point for any visit has to be the Grand Place, the central square, which looks sumptuous by day, with its gold leaf glinting in the sunlight, and darkly romantic by night. Although medieval in appearance, most of the buildings are late 17th century, constructed after the bombardment of the city by the French in 1695.

The options for dinner are limitless. Comme Chez Soi in Place Royale (three Michelin roses, 19.5 in Cautel Millau) is the best known, but needs to be booked weeks in advance (010 322 512 29 21). A cheaper, more accessible alternative is L'Ogenblik in the Galerie des Princes (010 322 511 61 51). Reckon on about £40 a head.

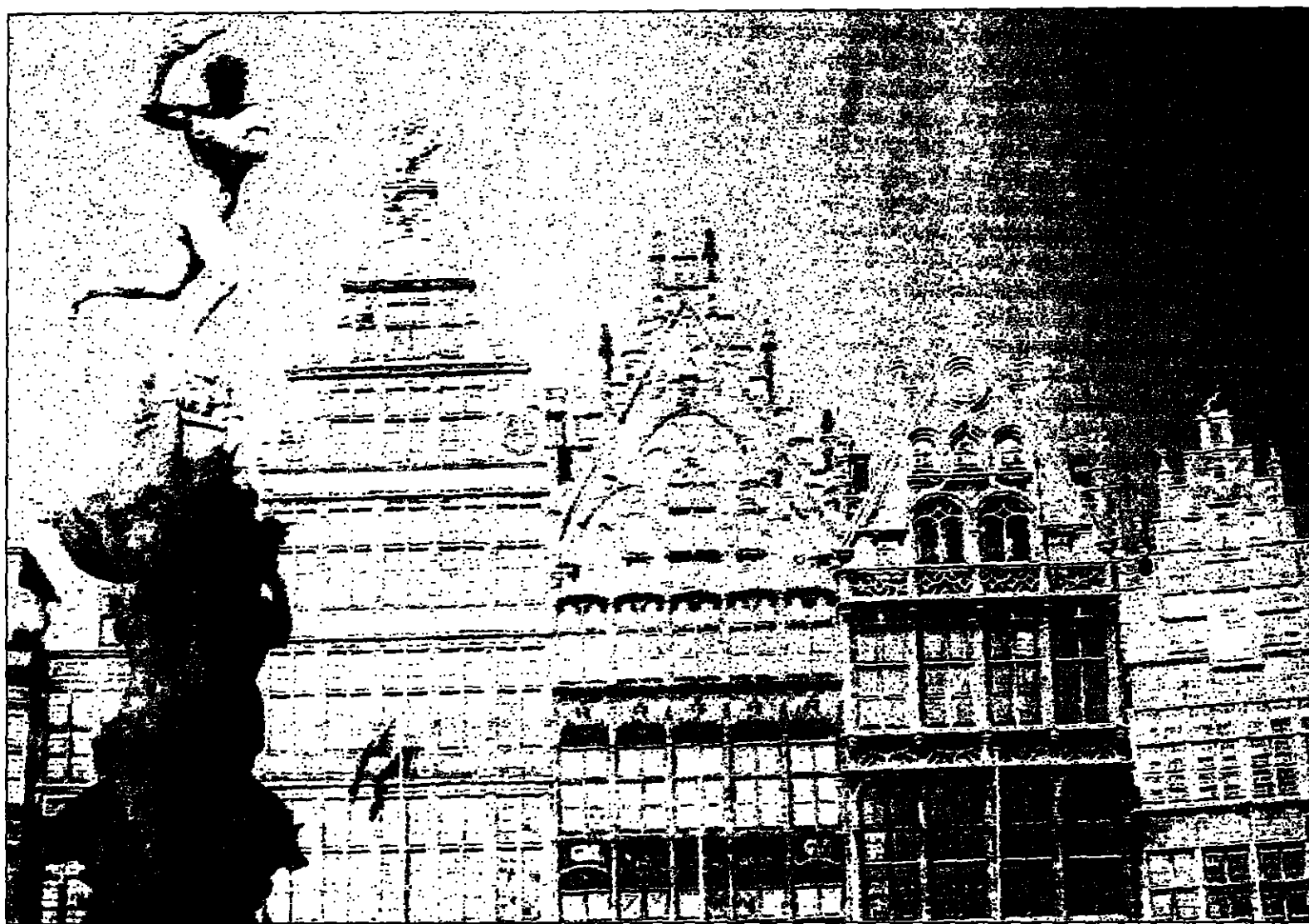
Saturday morning:

The Grand Place is again a good starting point, if only to pick up a handful of maps,

leaflets and the excellent Brussels guide from the tourist office in the town hall. You can spend a happy couple of hours exploring the side streets around the Grand Place which contain all kinds of off-beat shops, such as Azzaro, a music shop in the rue de la Violette, where you can buy everything from bagpipes to a didgeridoo.

A detour worth making is to the gloriously ornate Metropole Hôtel in the place de Brouckere, which has as stunning a bar as you'll find anywhere. Even a tomato juice is served with panache on a silver tray accompanied by its own bottles of tabasco and Worcestershire sauce. From the Metropole you can wander across the Place St Catherine to the old fish market then back down rue Antoine Dansaert which, with its stylish boutiques and bars, has become one of the most fashionable streets in Brussels. If you don't get sidetracked along the way, finish up for a late lunch at the Falstaff in rue Henri Maus, a big, buzzing Parisian-style brasserie, which is open virtually all hours of the day and night.

Saturday afternoon: Part of the Falstaff's appeal is its authentic turn-of-the-century decor, just one example of Brussels' impressive collection of art nouveau architecture. For a real gem, take a cab from the Falstaff to the Horta museum in rue Americaine, the exquisitely designed and furnished house of the architect Victor Horta. It's worth a visit for its staircase alone.



The real Brussels is far removed from its boring and bureaucratic image. Sophisticated, stylish and brilliant for food, it has as much to offer as Paris

Horta's is just one of a number of art nouveau houses in the St Gilles quarter which you can track down with the aid of a map you can buy from the Horta museum. Alternatively you could return to the city centre via the Avenue Louise, which contains a tempting assortment of up-market clothes shops.

Saturday evening: Brussels has a great tradition of puppet theatre, performed with wooden marionettes. The best place to see it is at the Toone theatre, a small bar off the petite rue des Bouchers

(entrance by Le Mouton d'Or). Although performances are in French or Flemish the stories, such as Carmen and the Three Musketeers, are easy enough to follow. Afterwards, you could go round the corner to the rue des Bouchers, more accurately nowadays a road of restaurants. The locals' advice is to avoid all those with elaborate displays of seafood. For traditional Belgian food go to Aux Armes de Bruxelles (010 322 511 55 98). For the best moules et frites (the classic Belgian dish of mussels and chips) head for Chez Leon just opposite (010 322 511 14 15).

Salon is Wittamer, an irresistible pâtisserie and chocolaterie whose windows I suggest you pass as quickly as possible.

Depending on your interests, you could visit any one of a number of museums. Just round the corner in the Place Royale is the Museum of Modern Art, with its excellent collection of Magrittes, which interconnects via a slightly confusing system of coloured circuits with the Museum of Ancient Art.

If you cross the place Royale you will find on the other side the Hotel Bellevue (entrance in the place des Palais) which contains a wonderfully eccentric collection of gold, silver and bejewelled hearts amassed by a heart specialist.

If by now you've had a surfeit of museums, you could walk through the Parc de Bruxelles up the rue Royale to the Astoria Hotel, another splendid example of gilded 19th-century grandeur where there are regular Sunday concerts. Alternatively — and you shouldn't miss it — you could head to the rue des Sables which contains the Centre Belge de la Bande Dessinée (the Museum of the Comic Strip), which is housed in another stunning Horta building. This is the kind of place you actually need a couple of days

to see, never mind a couple of hours. If you're a Tintin fan, you can check your know-how by putting names to drawings of 133 of the characters in the books. You can see some of the original illustrations for the Smurfs, or Schtroumpfs as they were originally known. A lot of the cartoons are in Flemish and more or less incomprehensible, but there is a remarkable section on the second floor, which explores the adult cartoon as an art form. There is also a restaurant, a library and reading room where you can dip into a collection of more than 25,000

comic books and a brilliant museum shop. If you can tear yourself away and don't have to leave Brussels until the evening, you'll have just enough time to stroll back to the rue Antoine Dansaert for an hour or so of live jazz at the Archiduc, a perfectly preserved 1930s bar.

FIONA BECKETT

● The author was a guest of the Brussels Hilton. Weekend breaks at the Hilton are offered by Crystal Holidays (081-241 4020) and Thomas Cook (071-492 4222), from £185 and £197 respectively for a two-night break.

TRAVEL TIPS

□ SWAN Hellenic (071-800 2200) is offering six-day Christmas breaks to a wide choice of European destinations, including Madrid, Bruges, Monaco, Vienna, Marrakech, Innsbruck, Krakow and Florence. Prices range from £925 to £1,325, including all flights, accommodation, sightseeing and meals. Departing mainly from Heathrow on December 21 to 23, depending on destination.

□ MYSTERIES OF INDIA (0181-574 2727) has a 13-day tour of India travelling by internal flight and/or chauffeur driven car from Delhi to Agra, Jaipur, Udaipur, Ajanta, Ellora and Bombay, flying by Air France from Heathrow on December 22. From £1,290 per person on a twin-share basis in four or five-star hotels.

□ MALTA TOURS (071-821 7000) offers one-week Christmas packages to two four-star hotels in Malta — the La Salita Hotel in Mellieha, from £274 per person and the Bernard Hotel in St Georges Bay, from £219 per person. Departing from Gatwick on December 22.

□ THE State Apartments at Kensington Palace, London, are open this year for the first time for Christmas tours on November 28 and 29, and December 5 to 7 and 12 to 14. Tours, which must be pre-booked, include the recently restored King's Gallery and the Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection. Morning and afternoon visits £12.50; midday lunch, cost £24.50. Call 071-937 9561.

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TRAVEL

25

CORNWALL: A National Trust country house is a dream base for exploring coves and sub-tropical gardens

The romantic setting for Du Maurier



An idyllic corner of Helford village, one of the rewards of following the coastal path

This autumn I stayed at a chunk of English country house, part of a 19th-century granite pile called Bosloe, high on a hill a mile from the mouth of the Helford river in Cornwall, virtually opposite Frenchman's Creek, made famous by Daphne du Maurier's book.

My guests were an old schoolfriend and her family, who live in an almost identical house in Dorset, and, despite echoes of Lucia and Mappistyle holiday house moves, they liked the place: it was closer to the sea than their own house and right beside the coastal footpath.

Inside Bosloe there is the welcoming air of a sturdy family home: vast pieces of antique furniture of the kind that goes cheap at auction because of their size, and a slightly haphazard selection of paintings suggesting a country house still inhabited by a family whose critical faculties are overruled by familial loyalties and memories. Even some of the naff curtain material suggests an English house where the word "taste" solely applies to the quality of that morning's kedgeree. In short, a truly welcoming place.

From the living room windows with their leaded lights, the view stretches out across well-tended gardens, down a couple of levels of lawn to a meadow by the side of the coastal path overlooking the Helford and the sea beyond. With every change of weather — it changes fast here — the scene transforms from balmy idyll to wild, stormy seascape and back to balmy idyll.

In the mornings, we breakfasted around an old millstone set on a pedestal in a sheltered part of the garden, overlooked only by our part of the house. In the evenings, we dined by candlelight around a long, polished oak table as shadows from the wood-burning stove flickered on the walls.

If Bosloe is this beautiful in late October it must be breathtaking in January when the



The 19th-century granite-built Bosloe is rented for holidays

camellias have begun to bloom. A mile down the small road at the top of Bosloe's drive nestles Durgan, a pretty hamlet of stone National Trust cottages (all for rent) around a small estuary beach where, this October, children on half-term played. The hamlet is at the lower end of the steeply sloping valley garden. Glendurgan, which was planted in 1826 by the Fox family with many unusual trees, including a vast Liriodendron (tulip tree), and is now owned by the Trust. The newly restored laurel maze is low enough not to frighten small people and allows bigger ones to cheat. Walking the maze is exhausting, because it is on a steep hillside.

Curiously, the helpful, framed Ordnance Survey map on the wall of our hall had handwritten notes about pretty churches and good beaches nearby but didn't mention that Glendurgan is slap bang beside another interesting sub-tropical (but non-Trust) garden, Trebah.

This garden, which includes a nature trail for children, lots of tree ferns and a ghost tree, is quite different, even though, like Glendurgan, it is set in a deep valley made luxuriant by palm trees, a host of sub-tropical plants and some of the most enormous gunnera plants — those rhubarb-like giants — I have ever seen.

Both gardens are worth visiting, though I noticed that the limited number of plants for sale at Glendurgan were

cheaper than the far greater range of plants at Trebah.

This part of Cornwall is a mass of microclimates, so that a short drive — or long walk via a ferry for those without small children — takes you from the sea to lush, exotically planted valleys, on to the wild heathland of the Lizard peninsula and to the glorious cliffs of Kynance Cove, where birds of prey — buzzards, I think — circle on the thermals.

The National Trust sells handy booklets, with maps, indicating walks and giving the history of various churches, houses, standing stones and tin mines. Where tin once brought Cornwall riches and Phoenician, later Roman, traders, the mines now bring in tourists, having been turned into museums.

At Land's End and at the Lizard — the mainland's most southerly point — there are old-fashioned tea rooms and gift shops, which feel as if they are perched on the edge of the world. Round the end of the Cornish peninsula at St Ives, the Tate gallery traces the history of the St Ives School of painters through their work, while the Barbara Hepworth Museum displays some of her sculptures in a water garden outside her workshop.

The Cornish Seal Sanctuary, near Gweek, goes down well with children: the seal hospital had two big-eyed seal cubs when we visited, and in an outdoor pool, on the banks of the Helford, some of the female seals were introduced as permanent visitors: they are blind.



The Cornish Seal Sanctuary, near Gweek, and particularly the seal hospital, goes down well with children on daytrips around the Lizard peninsula

Fact file

□ The author was a guest of the National Trust in the part of Bosloe house called Chatham, which sleeps eight. It is one of 94 Trust holiday homes in Cornwall, and one of 220 self-catering cottages and flats around the country owned by the Trust. The properties range from large ones, such as Chatham, to small properties, such as the Birdcage, a tiny, five-sided cottage for two people in the fishing village of Port Isaac. Cornwall opens January.

□ Prices for the Chatham holiday home range from £364 to £1,005 per week, depending on the season.

□ For a copy of the 1995 National Trust Holiday Cottage brochure, ring 01225 791133 or 01225 791199. A £1 contribution towards postage and packing is appreciated.

□ Glendurgan, 01326 250906; Trebah, 01326 250448; Tate gallery and the Barbara Hepworth Museum, 0736 796226; Cornish Seal Sanctuary, 0326 221361.

JANE OWEN

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 29

HAHNITUM

(a) An artificially produced radioactive element, atomic number 105. Symbol *Ha*, an acronym from the name of Otto Hahn (1879-1968), a German radio-chemist.

KARAKIA

(b) An incantation, from the Maori. "The priests established oral communication with their gods by means of karakia. A karakia may be defined as a formula of words which was chanted to obtain benefit or avert trouble. They cover a range which exceeds the bounds of religion. It is therefore impossible for one English word to cover adequately all the

meanings of karakia. All karakia are chants but there are a number of chants which are not karakia."

MOUTAN

(c) The tree peony, *Paeonia suffruticosa*, of the family *Ranunculaceae*, a large shrub bearing pale pink flowers, native to China and Tibet, the parent of many garden varieties producing single or double flowers of many varieties. From the Chinese.

KONZE

(d) A local name for Lichtenstein's hartbeest, *Alaphtus lichtensteini*, an antelope found in the plains of central and southern Africa, from the Swahili.

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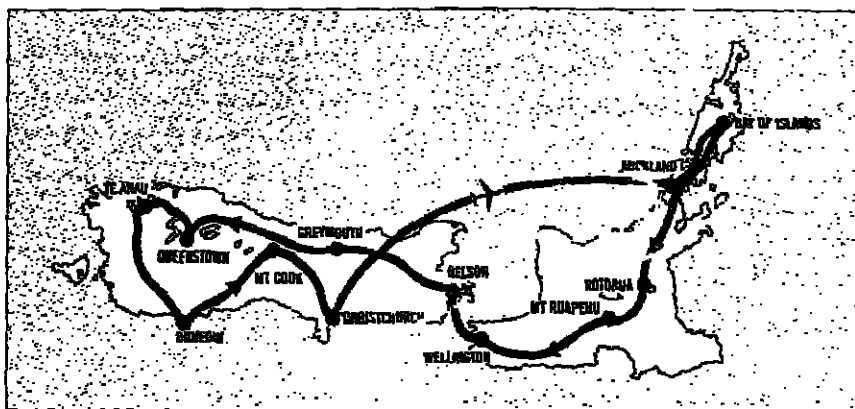
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GAMES

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by Raymond Keene

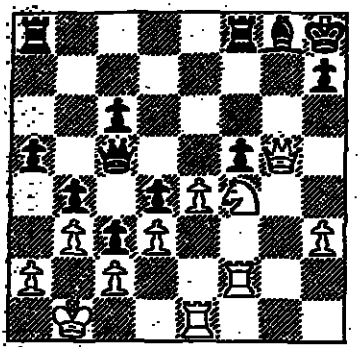
IN THE Intel Grand Prix in London this year, the first prize of \$30,000 hung on the match between the Ukrainian Grandmaster Vassily Ivanchuk and the Indian Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand.

White's final attack in one of the decisive games that brought Ivanchuk first prize stimulated some fascinating discussion among Times readers.

This position from the game was published as a Winning Move in *The Times* on September 20.

Ivanchuk—Anand
Intel Grand Prix
London, 1994

In this position, Ivanchuk found a clever quiet move that proved immediately decisive. Can you do better?



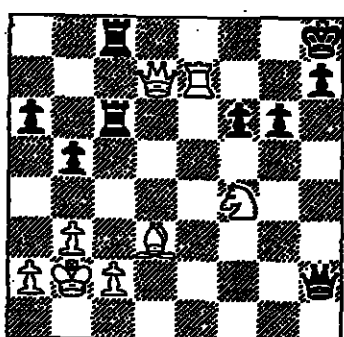
Solution: 1 Qh6, threatening 2 Ng6 mate, is unanswerable, e.g. 1... Bf7 2 Qh6 Kxg3 3 Rg1, mating swiftly.

Richard Beetham of Harrogate and Zaki Khorasani of Wimbledon both point out that 3 Ne6 intending 3... Bxg6 4 Rg1 mate is quicker than the given solution. This is correct. Well spotted!

The next position is from the game between Hodgson and van Wely (Donner Memorial, Amsterdam, 1994), and was published as a Winning Move in *The Times* on September 14.

How did White exploit his active piece play to force a decisive material gain?

Hodgson—van Wely, 1994



Solution: 1 Rzh7+! Qxh7 2 Nxe6+ Kxg8 3 Ne7+ winning Black's queen. Malcolm Edms of Reading suggests that White can do better with 1 Re8+ Kxg8 2 Qxe8+ Kg7 3 Qxe6 4 Qxe6. Although it is true that White should win from this position, Black can play 4... h5, when his h-pawn could cause White some anxiety.

However, David Wallis of Purley improves on this suggestion with 1 Nxe6+ Kxg8 2 Re8+ Kxg8 3 Qxe8+ Kg7 4 Qxe6 and White will win easily. This is a good alternative.

Christmas Book Tips

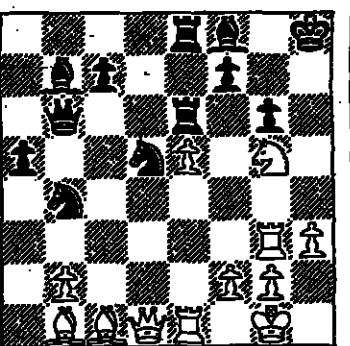
The British Chess Federation has announced its Book of the Year citation for 1994. The panel of judges awarded the prize to *Frank Marshall: United States Champion* by Grandmaster Andrew Solis, published by McFarland and Co. Unfortunately, copies are hard to come by. It is available only from specialist chess outlets, and there may be a long wait.

A book in similar vein which has caught my eye is *Carl Schlechter: Life and Times of the Austrian Chess Wizard* by Warren Goldmann, published in America by Chess Editions (\$36 inc p&h from the British Chess Magazine, tel 071 603 2877). This contains a massive 537 pages of Schlechter's games, comments and appraisals of his play. It is a labour of love and the only such book in English devoted to a true artist of the game who once tied a match for the world championship with Lasker.

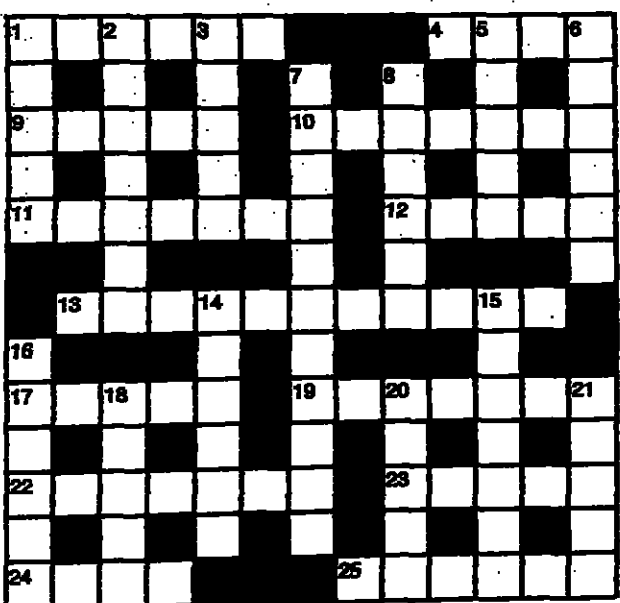
By Raymond Keene
This position is from the game Sax—Banas, Balatonberezny 1984. White has built up powerfully on the kingside and can now finish off with a quick combination. Can you see how?

Send your answers on a postcard to *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first three correct answers drawn on Thursday will win a British Chess Magazine publication. The answer will be published next Saturday.

Last week's solution: 1... Nd5.



TWO CROSSWORD



No 322

- ACROSS
- 1 Meal (6)
 - 2 Fifty per cent (4)
 - 3 Truck (5)
 - 4 Boding ill (7)
 - 5 Coagulate (7)
 - 6 Edge along (5)
 - 7 Proverbially tough, unsentimental (4,2,5)
 - 8 Derby course (5)
 - 9 Wicked, malicious (7)
 - 10 Feeling intense desire (7)
 - 11 Cry of approval (5)
 - 12 Humble (4)
 - 13 Directly (confronting) (4-2)
- DOWN
- 1 Survival from the past (5)
 - 2 Predatory fish (7)
 - 3 Distinctive (artistic) manner (5)
 - 4 Eschew (5)
 - 5 Do up (6)
 - 6 Primitive man, acc. to Romanics (5,6)
 - 7 Spanish festival (6)
 - 8 Sphere of influence (6)
 - 9 Close-fitting exercise garment (7)
 - 10 Fine parchment (6)
 - 11 Scorch (5)
 - 12 Thick rope; telegram (5)
 - 13 To faint (5)

SOLUTION TO NO 322

ACROSS: 1 Frog 4 Chastise 8 Cut a dash 9 Boil 10 Testy 11 Cruelty 13 Groyne 15 Siding 18 Paucity 20 Tarot 23 Bull 24 Playgoer 25 Vehement 26 Toud

DOWN: 2 Route 3 Ghastly 4 Clay 5 Aphorism 6 Table 7 Smitten 10 Tug 12 Sextuple 14 Realise 16 Draught 17 Gut 19 Calve 21 Omega 22 Waft

CROSSWORD BOOKS (Reduced postage until Dec 31): The Times Crossword Books (Books 1 & 2 £5.49 each), Books 3, 4, 5 & 6 £7.49 each, The Times Jumbo Crosswords (Books 1 & 2 £5.49 each, Concise Book £5.49), The Times Crosswords (Books 1 to 13 £5.49 each, Books 14 to 18 £6.49, NEW Book 19 £6.00 each, The Sunday Times Crosswords (Book 1 £4.49, Books 10, 11, 12 & NEW Book 13 £4.00 each, The Sunday Times Concise Books 1, 2 & 3 £4.00 each. Except the items in brackets, software available for all titles for IBM PCs and Acorn computers. Price £14.95 each — also The Times Computer Crosswords (Books 1 to 6). The Sunday Times Vols 1 to 6 and The Times Jubilee Edition. Prices in p.p. 13. Cheques to Akom Ltd, 51 Manor Lane, London SE13 5QW. Return delivery. Tel 081-852 4575 (24 hrs). No credit cards.

PUNCHLINE

READERS are invited to write an amusing caption for the cartoon on the right. The cartoon, from the Punch library, includes the contemporary caption.

The cartoon will be printed again next week on the Games page with a caption selected from those submitted.

Caption suggestions, on a postcard please, should be addressed to: Cartoon caption 31, Weekend Games Page, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The editor's decision is final.

The closing date for entries is Wednesday, November 23.



THE CENSUS PAPER.
Absent-minded Householder (who takes his duty very seriously). "AH, MARTHA JAMES—ER, WIDOW?—ER, AGE?—HM—THIRTY-FIVE, HM—MALE OR FEMALE?" Cook (indignantly). "FEMALE!"



"OK, so you'll call it a Frisbee—then what?"

The winning caption for last week's cartoon (printed above) was submitted by George Farrow, of Winston, near Darlington.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

HAHNIOUM

- A Kurdish seraglio
- An elision
- An artificial element

KARAKIA

- Yellow ivy
- An incantation
- Roast goat

MOUTAN

- A sheep's cheese
- Swiss purdah up the Alps
- The tree peony

KONZE

- An Austrian trumpet
- Host-guest relationship
- An antelope

Answers on page 25

COMPUTER GAMES

OUR Cyberspace Ten competition gave us our biggest response yet to a competition, and our judges their hardest challenge in selecting six winners. We asked you to dream up a game, and the entries included themes such as the horrors of school life as a teacher in "Primary School Hell", and a pensioners' platform game, "Senior Citizens' Challenge", wickily devised by a teenager.

But to business. Our first winner is Mrs Gwilym Shepherd of Nottingham for "Quandary", a game "for one to four players (local or networked) who pit their wits as national leaders against each other and the computer to maintain peaceful co-existence with their neighbours while advancing the interests of their own nation".

Players start with one of five continents, rich in one of five resources — food, natural resources, technology, finance or tourism — which accounts for half of the nation's wealth. A secondary resource gives you the other half, and military strength is a constant drain on your economy.

"While each player may have an excess of their prime resource, there's a shortfall in secondary

resources which has to be made good. Maintaining the balance as it is risks decay. Can you improve your nation's lot by negotiation? Will you wage war?"

Mr Mike Smart of Godalming,



ELECTRONIC ARTS

Surrey, believes one of the least explored areas for computer gaming is mountaineering. "Race to the Summit" is a race up one of all of ten Alpine peaks by up to 12 teams. The most direct route is the most difficult, and requires the best planning and leadership. "Crucial decisions are made at base camps, where leaders select their teams from a panel of differing ages, climbing skills, discipline, temperament, team spirit and past history. "An undisciplined loner may prove a liability to any team," he warns. Once at the rock face you must lead your teams the precarious way to the top.

Taking another sport equally seriously, Mr Geoff Webber of

Weymouth, Dorset, wins with his specialist "Yachting" title. "You start as a novice with a dinghy (Topper or Laser), and as your skill increases you win races and gain points with which to purchase better equipment and boats."

The entries of our remaining three winners have been mentioned in earlier columns. Master James Greig, 13, of Edinburgh, came up with "Crazy Golfing", a winning idea to put the fun back into putting. Ms Victoria Clare, of Leicester, entered "Cat Quest", a world where cool cats and street credibility collide. Finally, although we were inundated with ideas for government simulations, the best was considered to be "Prime Minister" from Mr David Willmots of Purley, Surrey.

Each of our winners will receive half a dozen hits from Electronic Arts: "Theme Park", "Wing Commander Armada", "System Shock", "Scooter's Magic Castle" and, on CD-Rom, "PGA Golf Tour 486" and "FIFA International Soccer."

Please keep all your news and views coming. Write to Computer Games, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN (fax: 071-729 6791).

BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

AS in many social groups, there is a definite hierarchy amongst spectators in bridge clubs. The pecking order was usefully defined many years ago in the Bridge Players' Beside Companion. The highest ranking are the kibitzers, who are allowed to talk directly to the players. Doorbitters can only talk amongst themselves, or to the kibitzers. Tasters are expected to remain silent, except for occasionally uttering "ts" disapprovingly. Martin Hoffman, author of several well-received bridge books and a renowned player himself, is a lightning quick analyst and one of the most feared kibitzers in the game. He was watching me play rubber bridge the other day when I picked up this hand:

♠AQ9754 ♥— ♦QJ82 ♣KQ4
I was South at Game All. West dealt, and this was the auction:

W N E S
1♥ Pass 4♥ 7

Anyone who is brought up on the Rule of Two and Three might get at bidding at this point, but I can assure you that if you gave the hand to an expert panel, there would be a unanimous vote for Four Spades. The risk of going for a large penalty is far outweighed by the fact that East may have made a pre-emptive raise, and the hand may belong to North-South.

Anyway, I bid Four Spades, which West doubled in voice of thunder. East passed with reluctance and West led the ace of hearts without bothering to hear me pass. This was the gloomy prospect:

♠32
♥K842
♦9
♣A109832
W N E S
♠AQ9754
♥— ♦QJ82 ♣KQ4

Contract: 4♠ Doubled. Declarer: South. Opening lead: ♥A

After ruffing the ace of hearts, I led a low diamond to the seven, nine and ten. East returned a spade to the nine, ten and two. West switched to the jack of clubs.

At this point I had a genuine chance of making the contract: if East had started with the king and one or two small spades, I could take the ace of clubs, unblocking the king from my hand, and play trumps intending to finesse the queen. But it seemed likely from the tone of the double and the reluctant pass that this would not be the distribution: with trumps 4-1 over me, my best shot to minimise the penalty was to play clubs.

Both defenders followed to the second club, and I played a third club; West gave it a long look, and discarded a heart and when East also discarded it was clear that West had started with four trumps.

Feeling pleased with my acumen I cashed the king of hearts, discarding a diamond, and ruffed a heart. Now I discarded my last diamond on a high club, and got out for one down when East had to ruff with a trump trick.

The complete deal was:
West Dealer Game All Rubber Bridge.

♠32
♥K842
♦9
♣A109832
W N E S
♠AQ9754
♥— ♦QJ82 ♣KQ4

Hardly had the last card been played before Martin was in action. "You know you could have made that, don't you." On a previous occasion when he made this intensely irritating remark to the declarer at the old St James's Bridge Club, the declarer leapt from his chair in such a rage that Martin felt it prudent to head for the door. I am more temperate, merely snarling "You are talking rubbish", but Martin shook it off manfully. He was itching to get on with the analysis. He scribbled down the position at which I had played a third round of clubs:

♠3
♥K84
♦—
♣A1098
W N E S
♠AQ9754
♥— ♦QJ82 ♣KQ4

"First of all, when you played a club, West should ruff and return a trump." True. Although West sacrifices a trump trick he immediately gets it back by killing dummy's diamond ruff. And the gain is that the declarer can no longer get to dummy's winners and has to lose two diamonds at the end.

"Second, when West discards a heart, you should win the club, take the king of hearts and a heart ruff, then ruff a diamond." I pointed out that was what I had done. Ignoring me, he continued: "In the four-card ending, you thought you were clever playing a club to discard a diamond. If instead you ruff a heart, your last three cards are ace-queen of spades and a diamond. As West has had to follow to the hearts, his last three cards are king-jack-eight of spades. You exit with your losing diamond. West has to ruff and give you the last two tricks, giving you ten tricks in all."

Eventually I agreed, but he'll be demoted to taster if I have anything to do with it.

THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

No. 3280: Symphony in C by Bandmaster

Bandmaster has stumbled on a long lost manuscript by a deranged composer. This takes the form of a diagram and some clues. Solvers are invited to solve the clues (which are normal and in the conventional order), to harmonise the inconsistent notation and to enter the notes in the diagram, together with the bars (which are symmetrically disposed). The composer sprinkled his work with accents (which can be ignored) but the one accidental should be noted. Appropriately, all the answers (including one which is merely a coda) are also in C. No numbers need be shown.

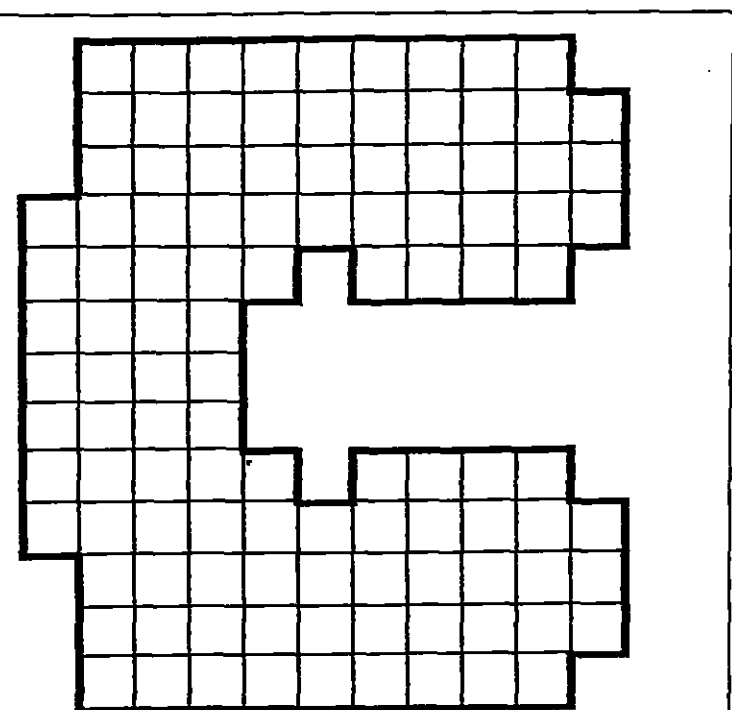
ACROSS
Steal after squadron? One's likely to get in a pickle (10) (2 words)
Love-drug sounds like a potential killer (5)
Old wild rose rooting subsequently in, for instance, Spain (8)
Eating these days, had food deliberately sliced (5)
Getting minor degree with time is easy (6)
A guard's required to go round about the length and breadth of the estate (7)

Thus huge tree's lopped somewhere in Scotland (8)
Incite hostility about by-pass built in sections (7)
Queen Elizabeth's put out the las of the anchor (7)
Wounded, therefore bloody (5)
Punctured? Indeed! (8)
The brilliance of one of Elgar's variations (5)
Rare defence requires time-honoured judge (5)
Hanger-on's about to follow a group of officers (5)
One given to misleading forecasts is amiable at broadcast (9)
One with water around — many plants end so (5)
Measured net cast back into the sea (7)
Novel instrument cases (7)
I provide a quick form of the beverage without ever brewing (6)
Took possession prematurely (nullified in court) (6)
The best Mercedes almost mended — a fortune goes to the mechanics (14) (4 words)

DOWN
Embarrassed, having to clear up around ghastly café (8)
To be bold enough and yet to shrink (4)
Genoa'd run wild without new one (4)
I'm well qualified to teach reggae dancing (6)
One bled, wounded by this? (5)
Unable to see the Queen's 'Ouse? (7)
Put the cover on — and started a game of billiards (6)
Petrol station's substituted liquids — protective gear's needed (6)
I twitch, enthralled by confounded temper (8)
Do I turn heads in beautiful evening dress? (3)
One half of hostile crowd gathered together (9)
A rogue joins recording company with a 'world of learning' (8)
Breeder's fancy emerged from the field (7)
A mother with sex-appeal in command... of a nudist camp? (8)
Have children, begorrah! (5)
Hebrew measure in the manner of Jewish lore (6)
Bitter priest leaves corrupt practice (6)
Do you get twice the lustre from Christmas advertising? (5)
No performance? When one's included it could be a real pain (7)
What's chafing, sore, occupying an age? (8)
Very enthusiastic about English pasture-ground (4)
Orwell's sound is that of the trumpet (5)
It's right to get out of very old folks' home and marry again (5)

Solution to No. 3277

The solution to Listener Crossword No. 3277 is given left. The clue "Digit sum of 25 equals digit sum of 17" should have read "Digit sum of 35 equals digit sum of 17". The winner, who receives Penguin books worth £50, was Mr A. Jackson, of Houghton Road, Henton-le-Hole, Tyne & Wear. Penguin books worth £20 go to Mr V. E. Ellis, of Bibury Avenue, Patchway, Bristol, and R. A. England, of Birch Grove, west London.



LISTENER CROSSWORD No. 3280

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

PRIZES: Book tokens worth £50 will go to the winner. The two runners-up will each win £20 book tokens.

ADDRESS: Readers should cut out and send the completed crossword and coupon above, to *The Listener* Crossword No. 3280, 63 Green Lane, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 6HE. Entries must be received by Thursday, December 1.

In 1982 Frank Myers was redundant and flat broke. 12 years later he's bounced back as managing director of his own company which exports 'Flatcones' around the world.

There's a lot of lolly in cones. The turnover is £3 million per annum and rising.

So how did he do it? Well, that "Eureka" moment came in 1985 when Frank turned to his wife and said: "Why do cones have to be round?" From then on he was on the road to success, even if it was to be a long one.

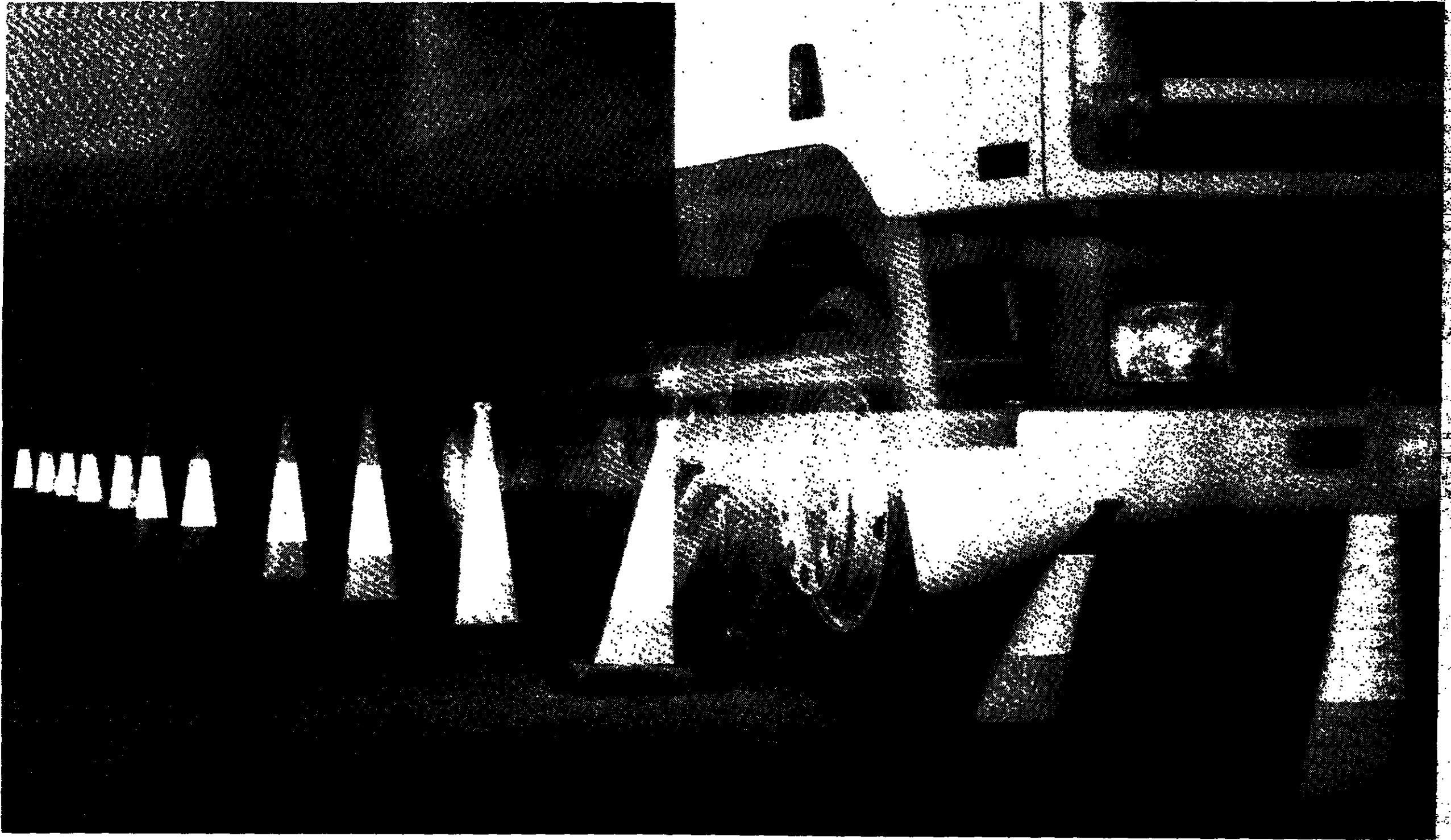
His research identified definite room for improvement. Traditional cones, he was surprised to discover, were responsible for up to 14% of motorway roadwork accidents. (Due to their tendency of getting trapped under vehicles when knocked over).

The 'Flatcone' he eventually developed is much safer as it just folds when run over then simply springs back into position. He also found a way to produce them very economically by using recycled tyre rubber for the base.

But probably his best idea was using the Patent Office. Thus ensuring his 'Flatcone' idea was properly protected. He even registered 'Flatcone' as a trade mark.

The Patent Office provides protection for all aspects of 'Intellectual Property'-trade marks, patents and registered designs. So if someone tried to get away with stealing Mr Myers' idea it wouldn't stand up in court.

To be Frank, we suggest you write or freephone for more information.



How to earn £3 million (even if your idea flops.)

Then make sure you write to Ted Blake for your free information pack at The Patent Office, Room 1 L02, Cardiff Road, Newport, Gwent, NP9 1RH. Call 0800 318654.

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